MARVEL 25TH ANNIVERSARY

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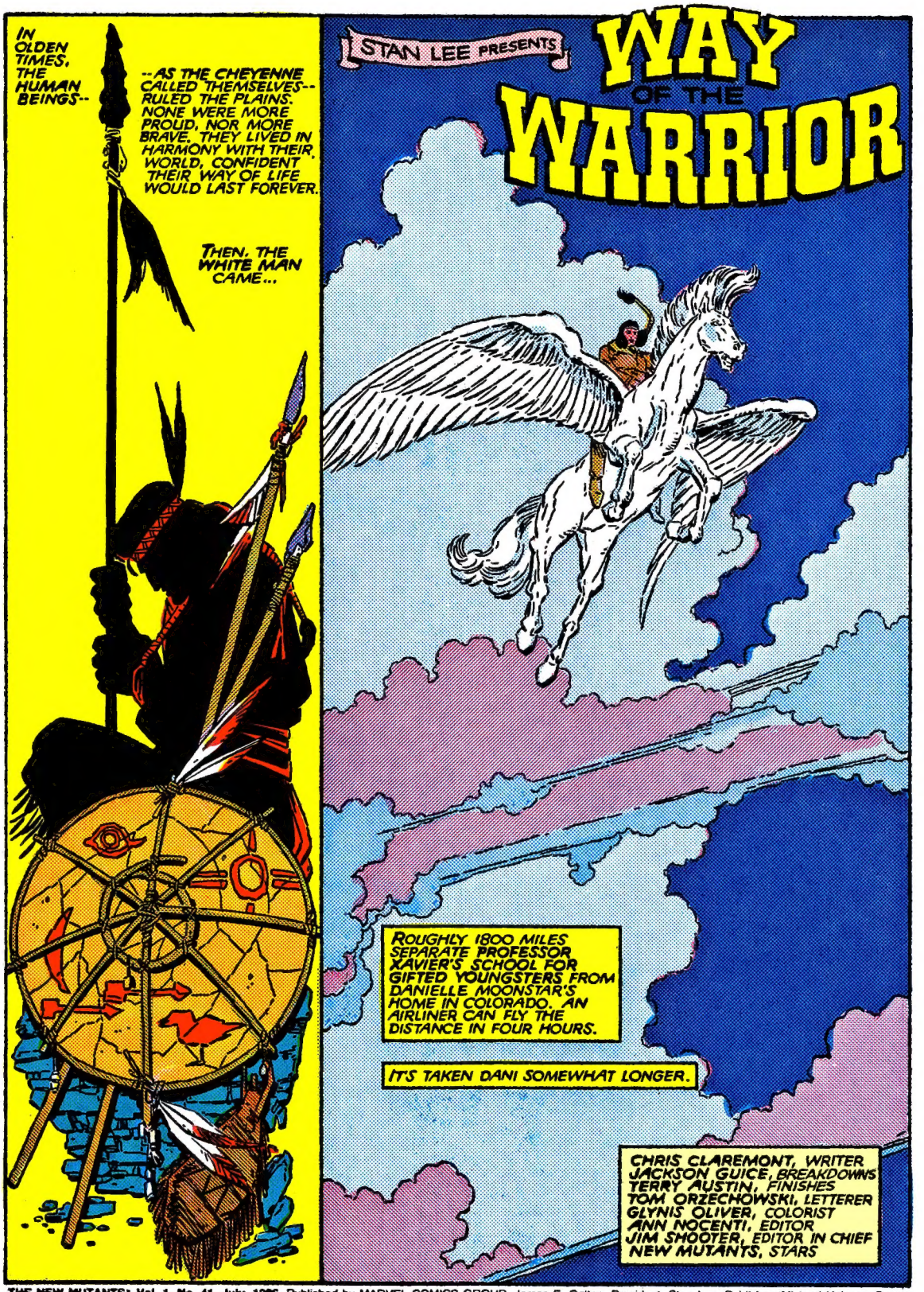
THE NEW MUTANTS™

MIRAGE VS DEATH

SHOWDOWN!


IN OLDEN TIMES, THE HUMAN BEINGS--
--AS THE CHEYENNE CALLED THEMSELVES-- RULED THE PLAINS. NONE WERE MORE PROUD, NOR MORE BRAVE. THEY LIVED IN HARMONY WITH THEIR WORLD, CONFIDENT THEIR WAY OF LIFE WOULD LAST FOREVER.
THEN, THE WHITE MAN CAME...
STAN LEE PRESENTS
WAY OF THE WARRIOR
ROUGHLY 1800 MILES SEPARATE PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS FROM DANIELLE MOONSTAR'S HOME IN COLORADO. AN AIRLINER CAN FLY THE DISTANCE IN FOUR HOURS.
IT'S TAKEN DANI SOMEWHAT LONGER.
CHRIS CLAREMONT, WRITER
JACKSON GUICE, BREAKDOWNS
TERRY AUSTIN, FINISHES
TOM ORZECHOWSKI, LETTERER
GLYNIS OLIVER, COLORIST
ANN NOCENTI, EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR IN CHIEF
NEW MUTANTS, STARS

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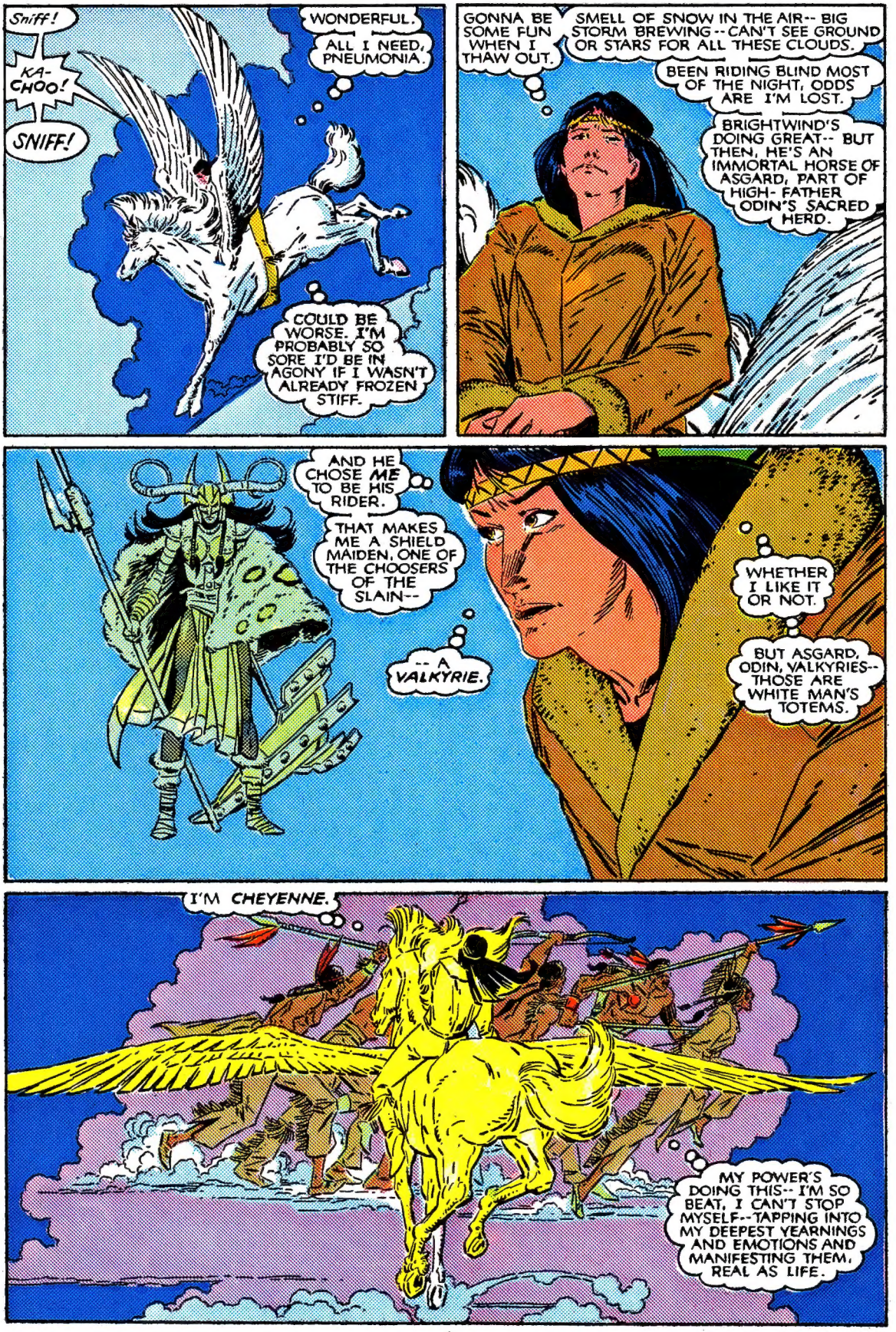
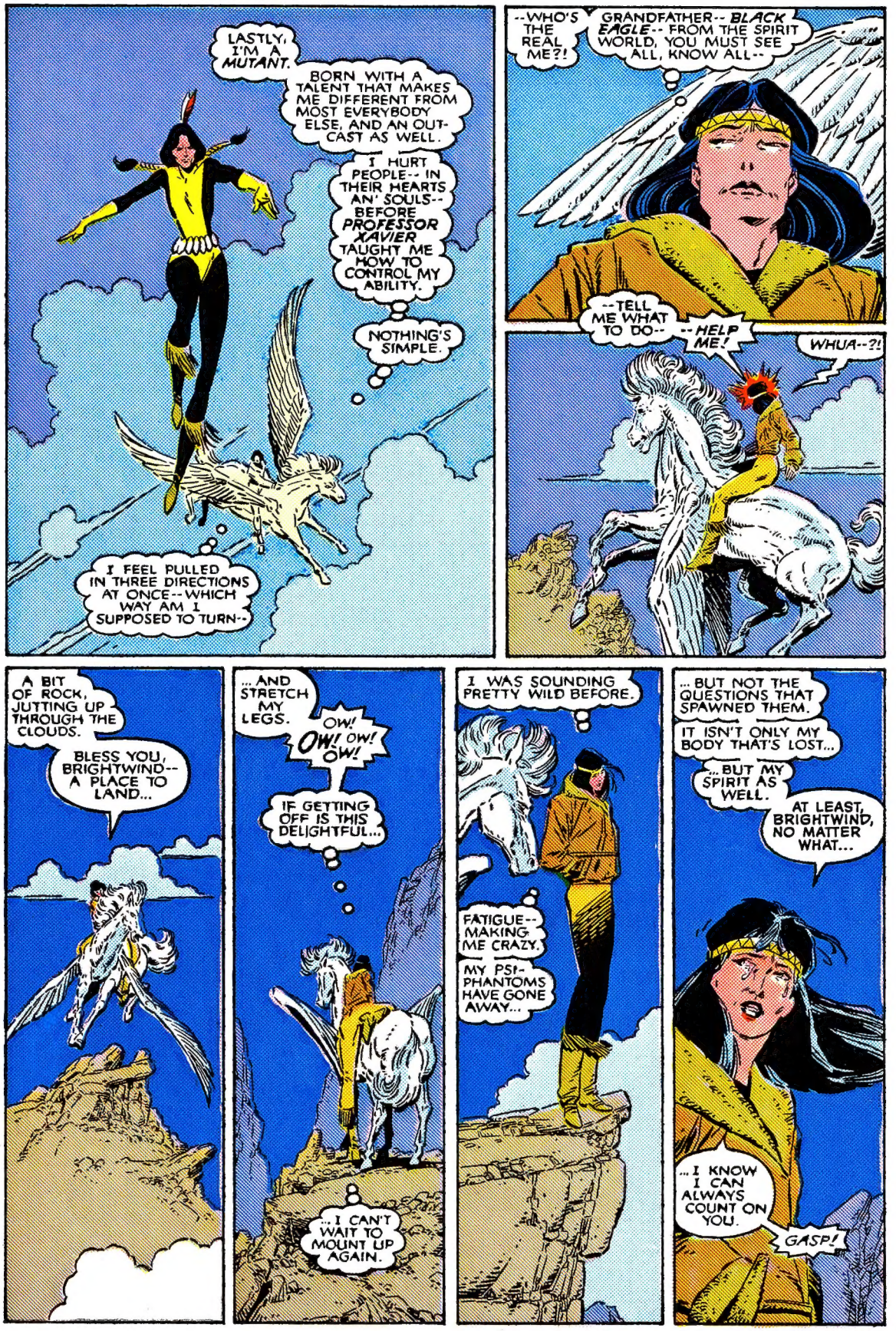
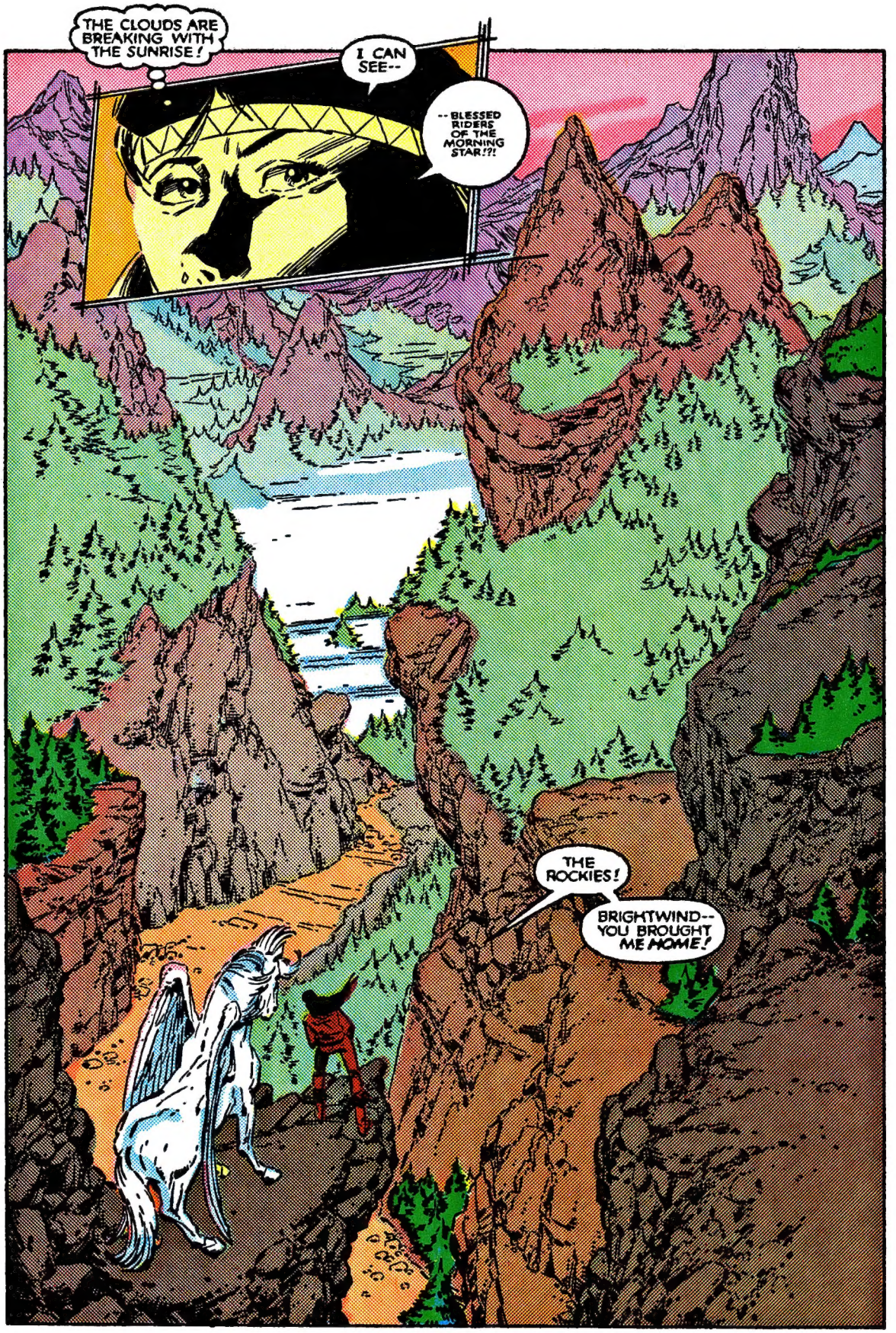
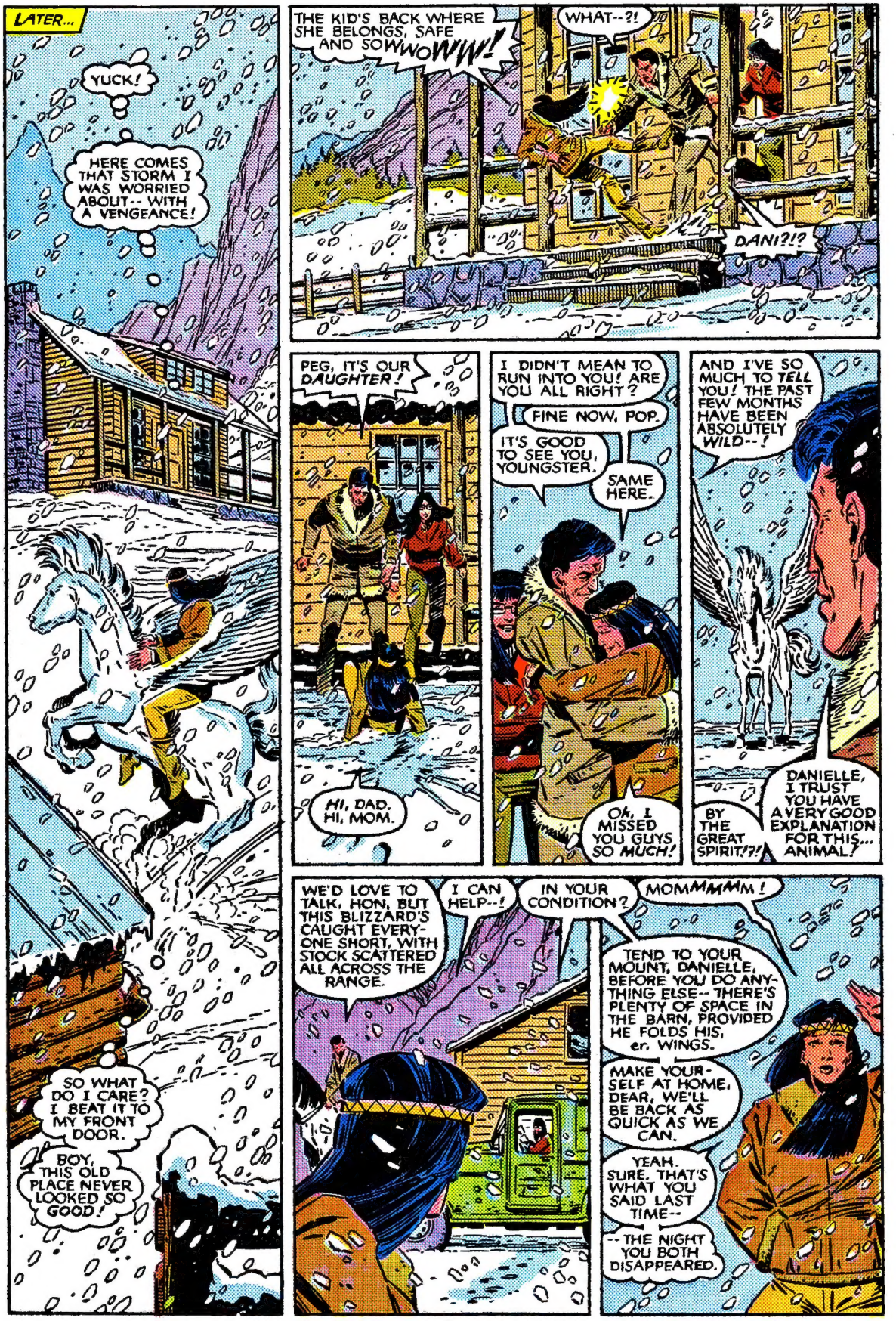
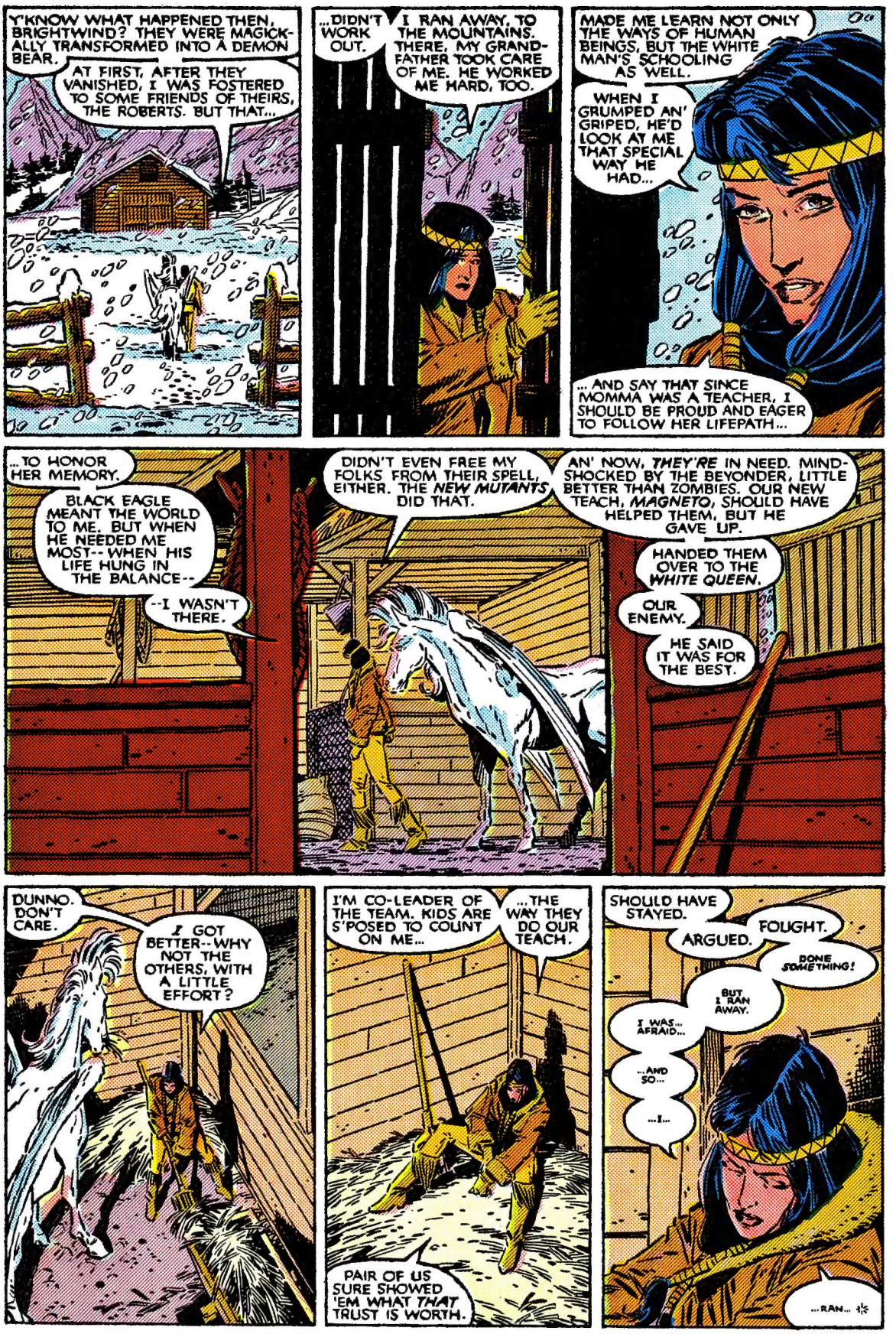
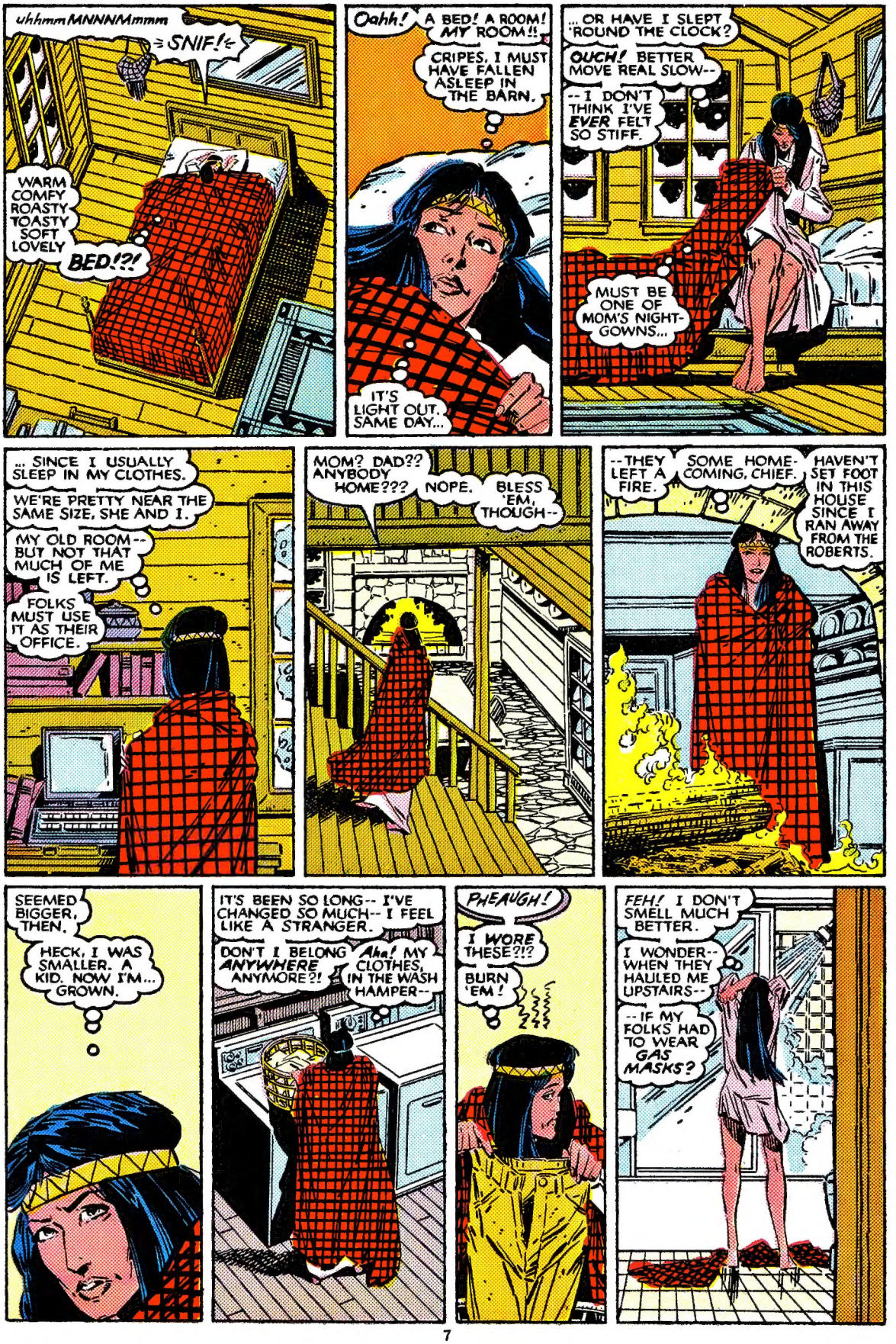

Sniff!
KA-CHOO!
SNIFF!
WONDERFUL. ALL I NEED, PNEUMONIA.
COULD BE WORSE. I'M PROBABLY SO SORE I'D BE IN AGONY IF I WASN'T ALREADY FROZEN STIFF.
GONNA BE SOME FUN WHEN I THAW OUT.
SMELL OF SNOW IN THE AIR-- BIG STORM BREWING--CAN'T SEE GROUND OR STARS FOR ALL THESE CLOUDS.
BEEN RIDING BLIND MOST OF THE NIGHT, ODDS ARE I'M LOST.
BRIGHTWIND'S DOING GREAT-- BUT THEN, HE'S AN IMMORTAL HORSE OF ASGARD, PART OF HIGH- FATHER ODIN'S SACRED HERD.
AND HE CHOSE ME TO BE HIS RIDER.
THAT MAKES ME A SHIELD MAIDEN, ONE OF THE CHOOSERS OF THE SLAIN--
-- A VALKYRIE.
WHETHER I LIKE IT OR NOT.
BUT ASGARD, ODIN, VALKYRIES-- THOSE ARE WHITE MAN'S TOTEMS.
I'M CHEYENNE.
MY POWER'S DOING THIS-- I'M SO BEAT, I CAN'T STOP MYSELF--TAPPING INTO MY DEEPEST YEARNINGS AND EMOTIONS AND MANIFESTING THEM, REAL AS LIFE.

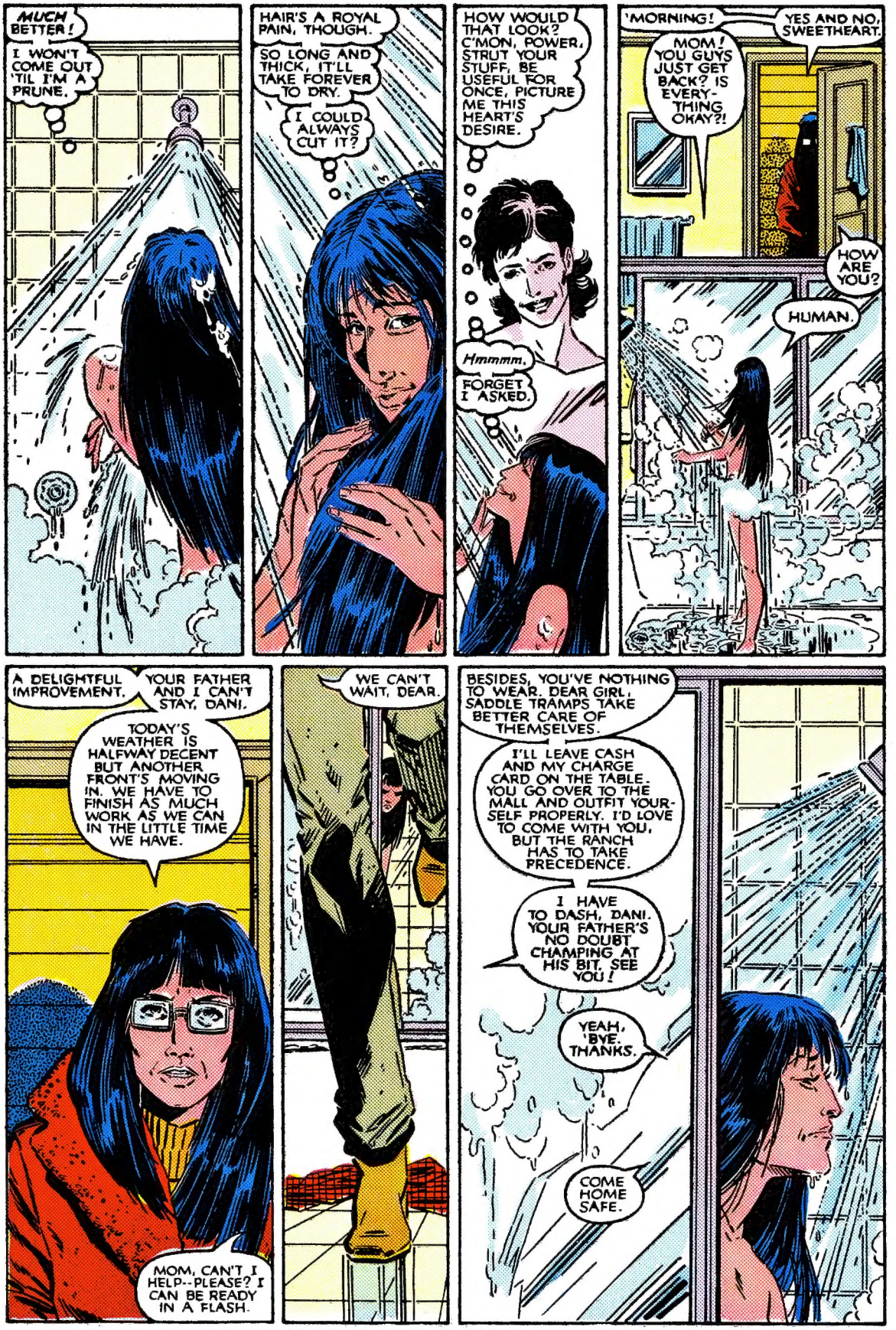

LASTLY, I'M A MUTANT.
BORN WITH A TALENT THAT MAKES ME DIFFERENT FROM MOST EVERYBODY ELSE, AND AN OUT-CAST AS WELL.
I HURT PEOPLE-- IN THEIR HEARTS AN' SOULS-- BEFORE PROFESSOR XAVIER TAUGHT ME HOW TO CONTROL MY ABILITY.
NOTHING'S SIMPLE.
I FEEL PULLED IN THREE DIRECTIONS AT ONCE--WHICH WAY AM I SUPPOSED TO TURN--
--WHO'S THE REAL ME?!
GRANDFATHER-- BLACK EAGLE-- FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD, YOU MUST SEE ALL, KNOW ALL--
--TELL ME WHAT TO DO--
--HELP ME!
WHUA--?!
A BIT OF ROCK, JUTTING UP THROUGH THE CLOUDS.
BLESS YOU, BRIGHTWIND-- A PLACE TO LAND...
... AND STRETCH MY LEGS.
OW! OW! OW!
IF GETTING OFF IS THIS DELIGHTFUL...
... I CAN'T WAIT TO MOUNT UP AGAIN.
I WAS SOUNDING PRETTY WILD BEFORE.
FATIGUE-- MAKING ME CRAZY.
MY PSI-PHANTOMS HAVE GONE AWAY...
... BUT NOT THE QUESTIONS THAT SPAWNED THEM.
IT ISN'T ONLY MY BODY THAT'S LOST...
... BUT MY SPIRIT AS WELL.
AT LEAST, BRIGHTWIND, NO MATTER WHAT...
... I KNOW I CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON YOU.
GASP!

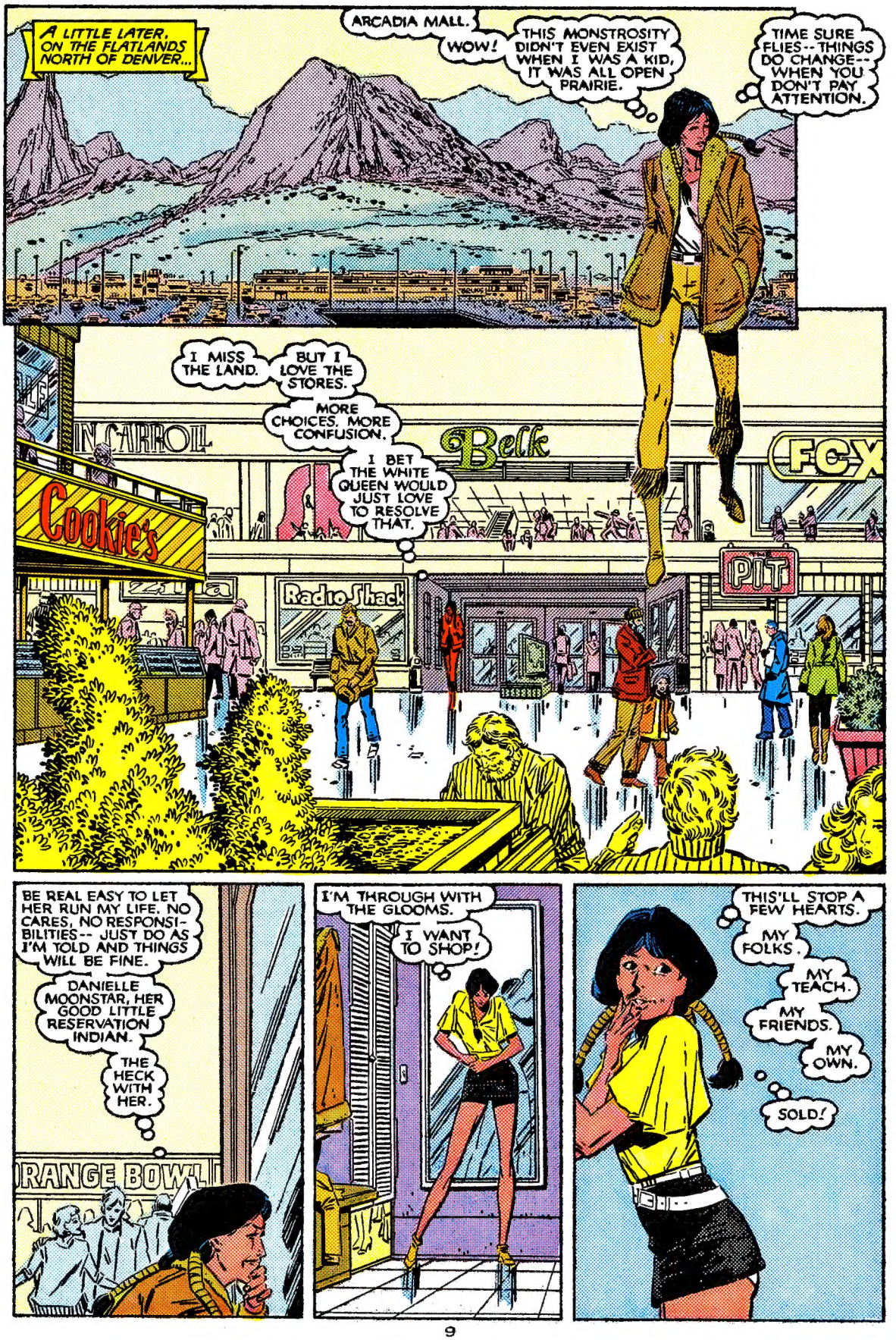

THE CLOUDS ARE BREAKING WITH THE SUNRISE!
I CAN SEE--
--BLESSED RIDERS OF THE MORNING STAR!?!
THE ROCKIES!
BRIGHTWIND--YOU BROUGHT ME HOME!

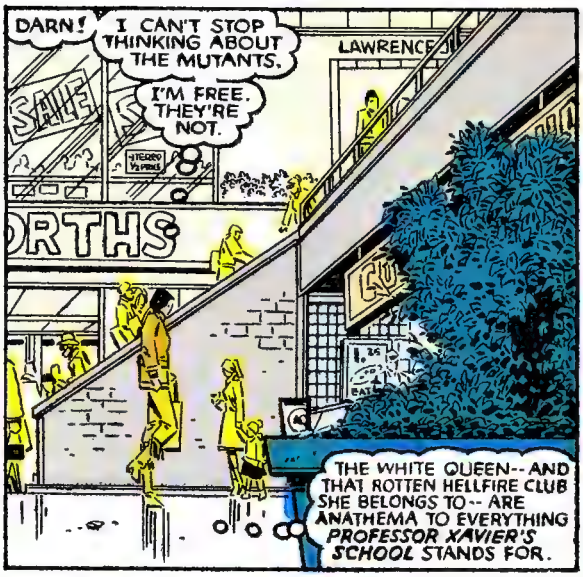

LATER...
YUCK!
HERE COMES THAT STORM I WAS WORRIED ABOUT-- WITH A VENGEANCE!
SO WHAT DO I CARE? I BEAT IT TO MY FRONT DOOR.
BOY, THIS OLD PLACE NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD!
THE KID'S BACK WHERE SHE BELONGS, SAFE AND SOWWOWWW!
WHAT--?!
DANI?!?
PEG, IT'S OUR DAUGHTER!
HI, DAD. HI, MOM.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO RUN INTO YOU! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
FINE NOW, POP.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, YOUNGSTER.
SAME HERE.
OH, I MISSED YOU GUYS SO MUCH!
AND I'VE SO MUCH TO TELL YOU! THE PAST FEW MONTHS HAVE BEEN ABSOLUTELY WILD--!
BY THE GREAT SPIRIT!?!
DANIELLE, I TRUST YOU HAVE A VERY GOOD EXPLANATION FOR THIS... ANIMAL!
WE'D LOVE TO TALK, HON, BUT THIS BLIZZARD'S CAUGHT EVERY-ONE SHORT, WITH STOCK SCATTERED ALL ACROSS THE RANGE.
I CAN HELP--!
IN YOUR CONDITION?
MOMMMMM!
TEND TO YOUR MOUNT, DANIELLE, BEFORE YOU DO ANY-THING ELSE-- THERE'S PLENTY OF SPACE IN THE BARN, PROVIDED HE FOLDS HIS, er, WINGS.
MAKE YOUR-SELF AT HOME, DEAR, WE'LL BE BACK AS QUICK AS WE CAN.
YEAH. SURE. THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID LAST TIME--
-- THE NIGHT YOU BOTH DISAPPEARED.


Y'KNOW WHAT HAPPENED THEN, BRIGHTWIND? THEY WERE MAGICKALLY TRANSFORMED INTO A DEMON BEAR.
AT FIRST, AFTER THEY VANISHED, I WAS FOSTERED TO SOME FRIENDS OF THEIRS, THE ROBERTS. BUT THAT...
...DIDN'T WORK OUT.
I RAN AWAY, TO THE MOUNTAINS. THERE, MY GRANDFATHER TOOK CARE OF ME. HE WORKED ME HARD, TOO.
MADE ME LEARN NOT ONLY THE WAYS OF HUMAN BEINGS, BUT THE WHITE MAN'S SCHOOLING AS WELL.
WHEN I GRUMPED AN' GRIPED, HE'D LOOK AT ME THAT SPECIAL WAY HE HAD...
... AND SAY THAT SINCE MOMMA WAS A TEACHER, I SHOULD BE PROUD AND EAGER TO FOLLOW HER LIFEPATH...
...TO HONOR HER MEMORY.
BLACK EAGLE MEANT THE WORLD TO ME. BUT WHEN HE NEEDED ME MOST-- WHEN HIS LIFE HUNG IN THE BALANCE--
--I WASN'T THERE.
DIDN'T EVEN FREE MY FOLKS FROM THEIR SPELL, EITHER. THE NEW MUTANTS DID THAT.
AN' NOW, THEY'RE IN NEED. MIND-SHOCKED BY THE BEYONDER, LITTLE BETTER THAN ZOMBIES. OUR NEW TEACH, MAGNETO, SHOULD HAVE HELPED THEM, BUT HE GAVE UP.
HANDED THEM OVER TO THE WHITE QUEEN.
OUR ENEMY.
HE SAID IT WAS FOR THE BEST.
DUNNO. DON'T CARE.
I GOT BETTER--WHY NOT THE OTHERS, WITH A LITTLE EFFORT?
I'M CO-LEADER OF THE TEAM. KIDS ARE S'POSED TO COUNT ON ME...
...THE WAY THEY DO OUR TEACH.
PAIR OF US SURE SHOWED 'EM WHAT THAT TRUST IS WORTH.
SHOULD HAVE STAYED.
ARGUED.
FOUGHT.
DONE SOMETHING!
BUT I RAN AWAY.
I WAS... AFRAID...
...AND SO...
...I...
...RAN...


uhhmmMMNNNMmmm
SNIF!
WARM COMFY ROASTY TOASTY SOFT LOVELY
BED!?!
Oahh!
A BED! A ROOM! MY ROOM!!
CRIPES, I MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP IN THE BARN.
IT'S LIGHT OUT. SAME DAY...
.. OR HAVE I SLEPT 'ROUND THE CLOCK?
OUCH! BETTER MOVE REAL SLOW--
--I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER FELT SO STIFF.
MUST BE ONE OF MOM'S NIGHT-GOWNS...
... SINCE I USUALLY SLEEP IN MY CLOTHES.
WE'RE PRETTY NEAR THE SAME SIZE, SHE AND I.
MY OLD ROOM-- BUT NOT THAT MUCH OF ME IS LEFT.
FOLKS MUST USE IT AS THEIR OFFICE.
MOM? DAD?? ANYBODY HOME???
NOPE.
BLESS 'EM, THOUGH--
--THEY LEFT A FIRE.
SOME HOME-COMING, CHIEF.
HAVEN'T SET FOOT IN THIS HOUSE SINCE I RAN AWAY FROM THE ROBERTS.
SEEMED BIGGER, THEN.
HECK, I WAS SMALLER. A KID. NOW I'M... GROWN.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG-- I'VE CHANGED SO MUCH-- I FEEL LIKE A STRANGER.
DON'T I BELONG ANYWHERE ANYMORE?!
Aha! MY CLOTHES, IN THE WASH HAMPER--
PHEAUGH!
I WORE THESE?!?
BURN 'EM!
FEH! I DON'T SMELL MUCH BETTER.
I WONDER-- WHEN THEY HAULED ME UPSTAIRS--
--IF MY FOLKS HAD TO WEAR GAS MASKS?

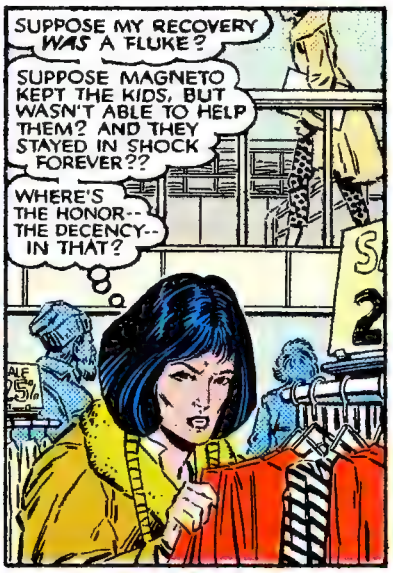

MUCH BETTER!
I WON'T COME OUT 'TIL I'M A PRUNE.
HAIR'S A ROYAL PAIN, THOUGH.
SO LONG AND THICK, IT'LL TAKE FOREVER TO DRY.
I COULD ALWAYS CUT IT?
HOW WOULD THAT LOOK? C'MON, POWER, STRUT YOUR STUFF, BE USEFUL FOR ONCE, PICTURE ME THIS HEART'S DESIRE.
Hmmmm.
FORGET I ASKED.
'MORNING!
YES AND NO, SWEETHEART.
MOM! YOU GUYS JUST GET BACK? IS EVERY-THING OKAY?!
HOW ARE YOU?
HUMAN.
A DELIGHTFUL IMPROVEMENT.
YOUR FATHER AND I CAN'T STAY, DANI.
TODAY'S WEATHER IS HALFWAY DECENT BUT ANOTHER FRONT'S MOVING IN. WE HAVE TO FINISH AS MUCH WORK AS WE CAN IN THE LITTLE TIME WE HAVE.
MOM, CAN'T I HELP--PLEASE? I CAN BE READY IN A FLASH.
WE CAN'T WAIT, DEAR.
BESIDES, YOU'VE NOTHING TO WEAR, DEAR GIRL. SADDLE TRAMPS TAKE BETTER CARE OF THEMSELVES.
I'LL LEAVE CASH AND MY CHARGE CARD ON THE TABLE. YOU GO OVER TO THE MALL AND OUTFIT YOUR-SELF PROPERLY. I'D LOVE TO COME WITH YOU, BUT THE RANCH HAS TO TAKE PRECEDENCE.
I HAVE TO DASH, DANI. YOUR FATHER'S NO DOUBT CHAMPING AT HIS BIT. SEE YOU!
YEAH, 'BYE. THANKS.
COME HOME SAFE.


A LITTLE LATER, ON THE FLATLANDS NORTH OF DENVER...
ARCADIA MALL.
WOW!
THIS MONSTROSITY DIDN'T EVEN EXIST WHEN I WAS A KID, IT WAS ALL OPEN PRAIRIE.
TIME SURE FLIES--THINGS DO CHANGE--WHEN YOU DON'T PAY ATTENTION.
I MISS THE LAND.
BUT I LOVE THE STORES.
MORE CHOICES. MORE CONFUSION.
I BET THE WHITE QUEEN WOULD JUST LOVE TO RESOLVE THAT.
CARROLL
Belk
FCX
Cookie's
Radio Shack
PIT
BE REAL EASY TO LET HER RUN MY LIFE. NO CARES, NO RESPONSIBILITIES-- JUST DO AS I'M TOLD AND THINGS WILL BE FINE.
DANIELLE MOONSTAR, HER GOOD LITTLE RESERVATION INDIAN.
THE HECK WITH HER.
ORANGE BOWL
I'M THROUGH WITH THE GLOOMS.
I WANT TO SHOP!
THIS'LL STOP A FEW HEARTS.
MY FOLKS.
MY TEACH.
MY FRIENDS.
MY OWN.
SOLD!


DARN!
I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THE MUTANTS.
I'M FREE. THEY'RE NOT.
LAWRENCE
THE WHITE QUEEN--AND THAT ROTTEN HELLFIRE CLUB SHE BELONGS TO--ARE ANATHEMA TO EVERYTHING PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL STANDS FOR.

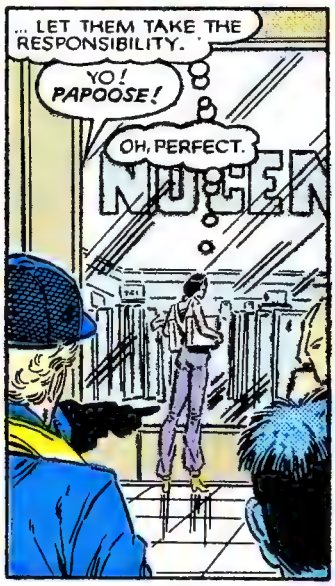
THOSE CREEPS COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT MUTANTS AS PEOPLE. WE'RE TOOLS TO THEM--COMMODITIES--TO BE BOUGHT, SOLD, USED, THROWN AWAY.
THE SAME ATTITUDE--THE SAME ARROGANCE AND GREED--THAT SLAUGHTERED THE BUFFALO AND DESTROYED THE HUMAN BEINGS. ALL THE INDIAN NATIONS.
BUT WHAT DO I KNOW?

THE WHITE MAN--AND HIS WAY OF LIFE--WON. MAYBE THAT MEANS IT'S BETTER?
WHICH MATTERS MORE...
... SURVIVAL OR HONOR?


SUPPOSE MY RECOVERY WAS A FLUKE?
SUPPOSE MAGNETO KEPT THE KIDS, BUT WASN'T ABLE TO HELP THEM? AND THEY STAYED IN SHOCK FOREVER??
WHERE'S THE HONOR--THE DECENCY--IN THAT?

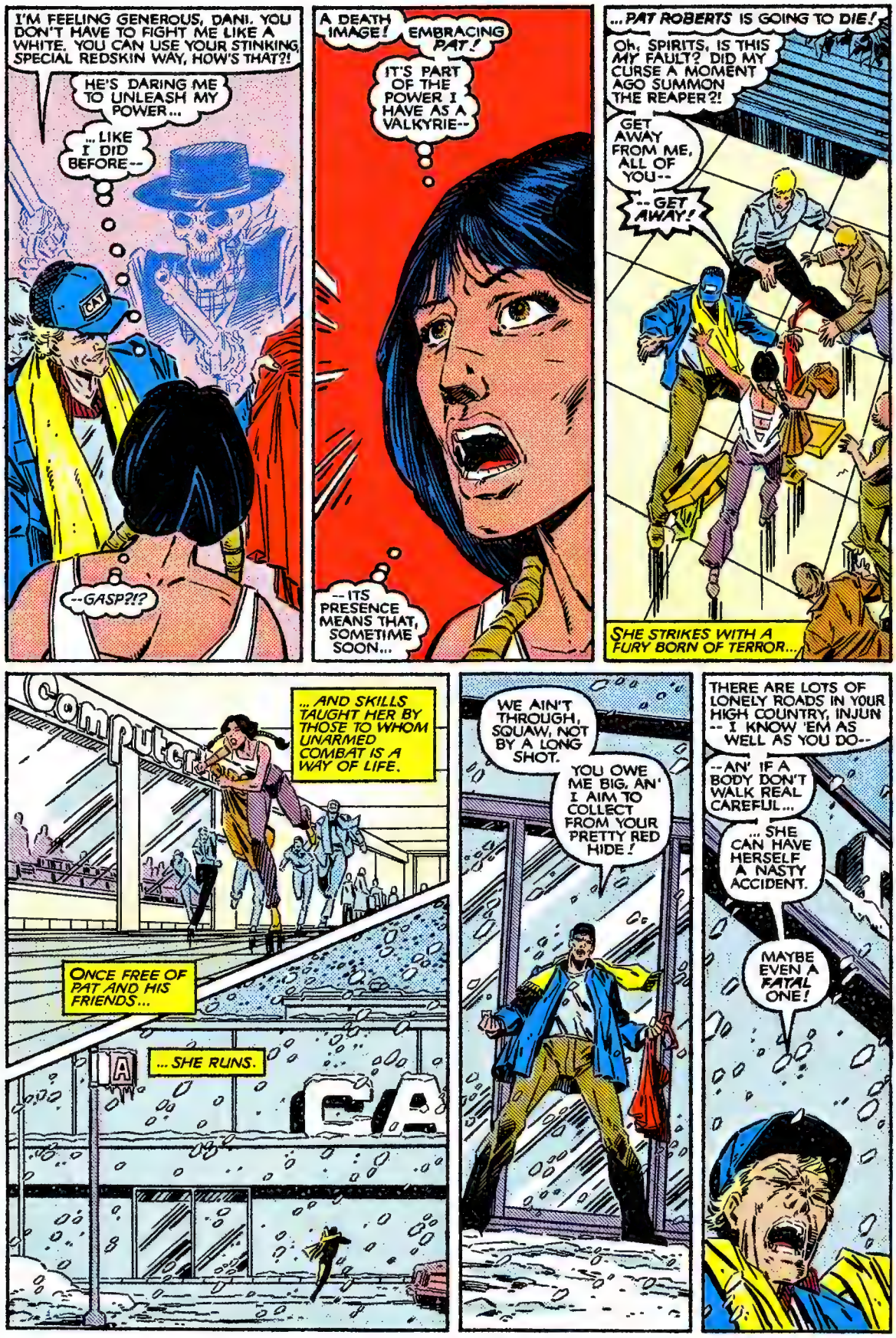
IF THE QUEEN CAN HEAL THEM--WHATEVER HER REASONS--
--ISN'T THAT GOOD?
HAVE I THE RIGHT...

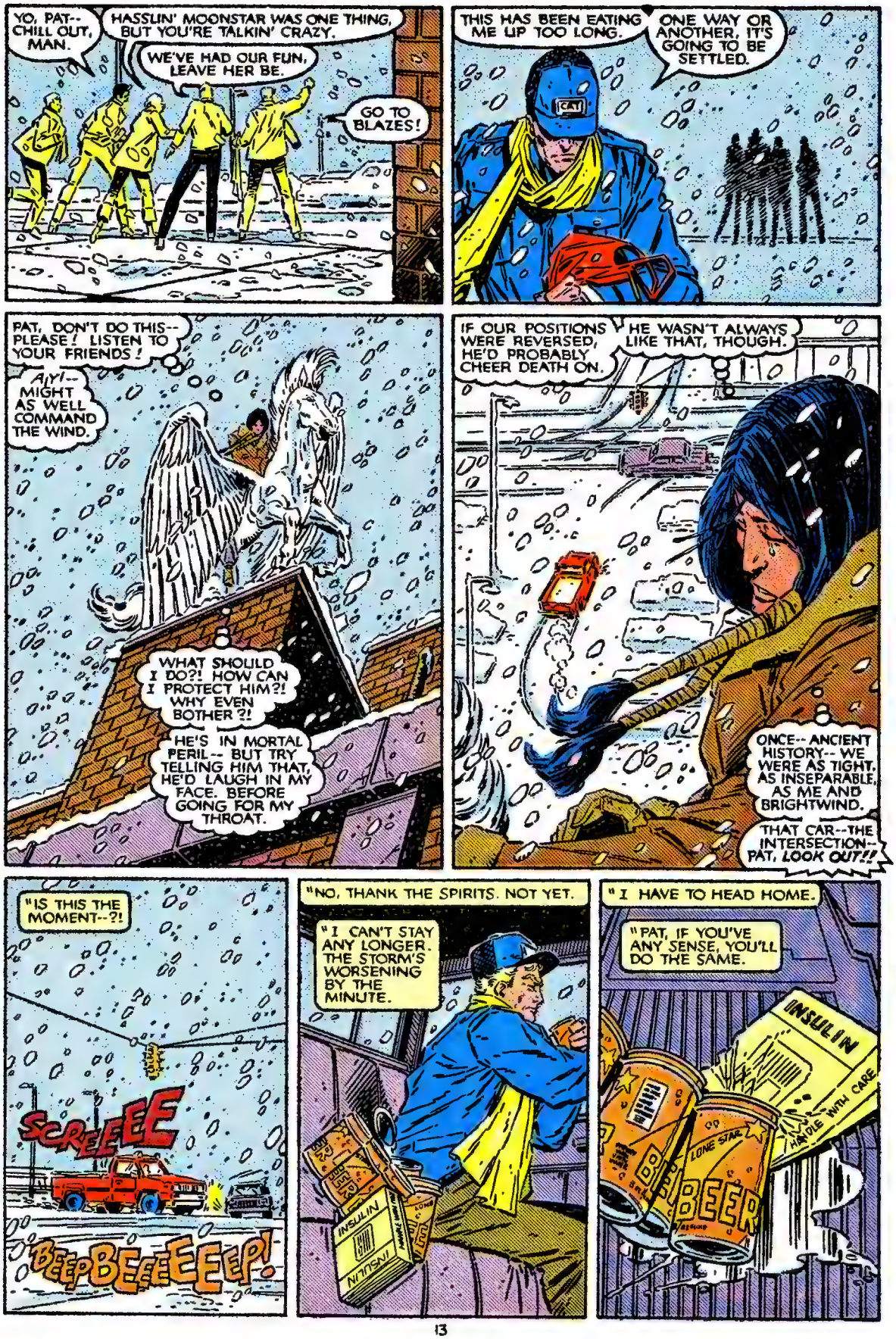
...TO DENY THE KIDS THEIR HAPPINESS?
MAYBE MY FOLKS CAN TELL ME?
THERE YOU GO, LITTLE SPIRIT--
--PASS THE BUCK, LET THEM DECIDE FOR YOU...

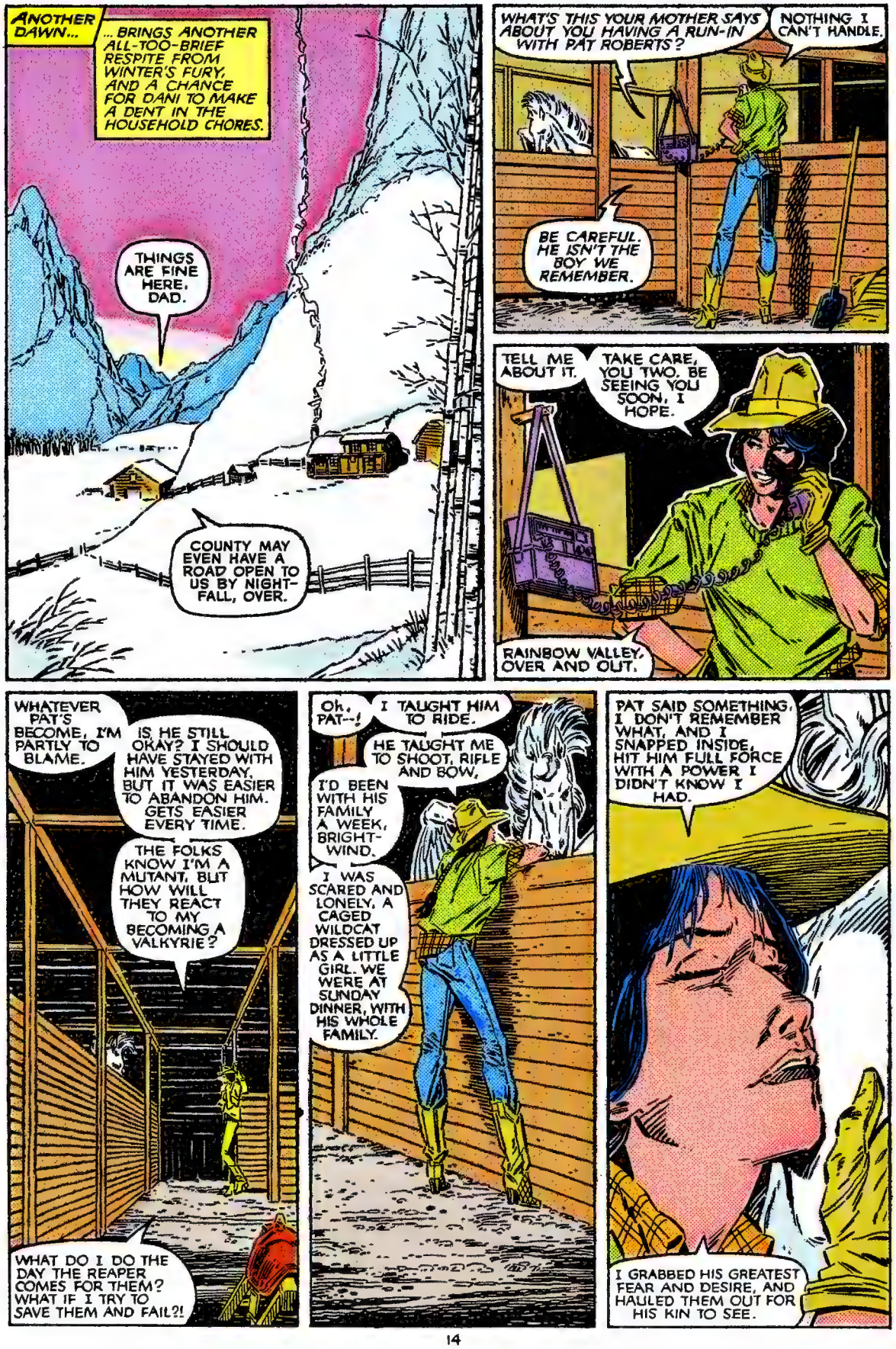

... LET THEM TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY.
YO! PAPOOSE!
OH, PERFECT.

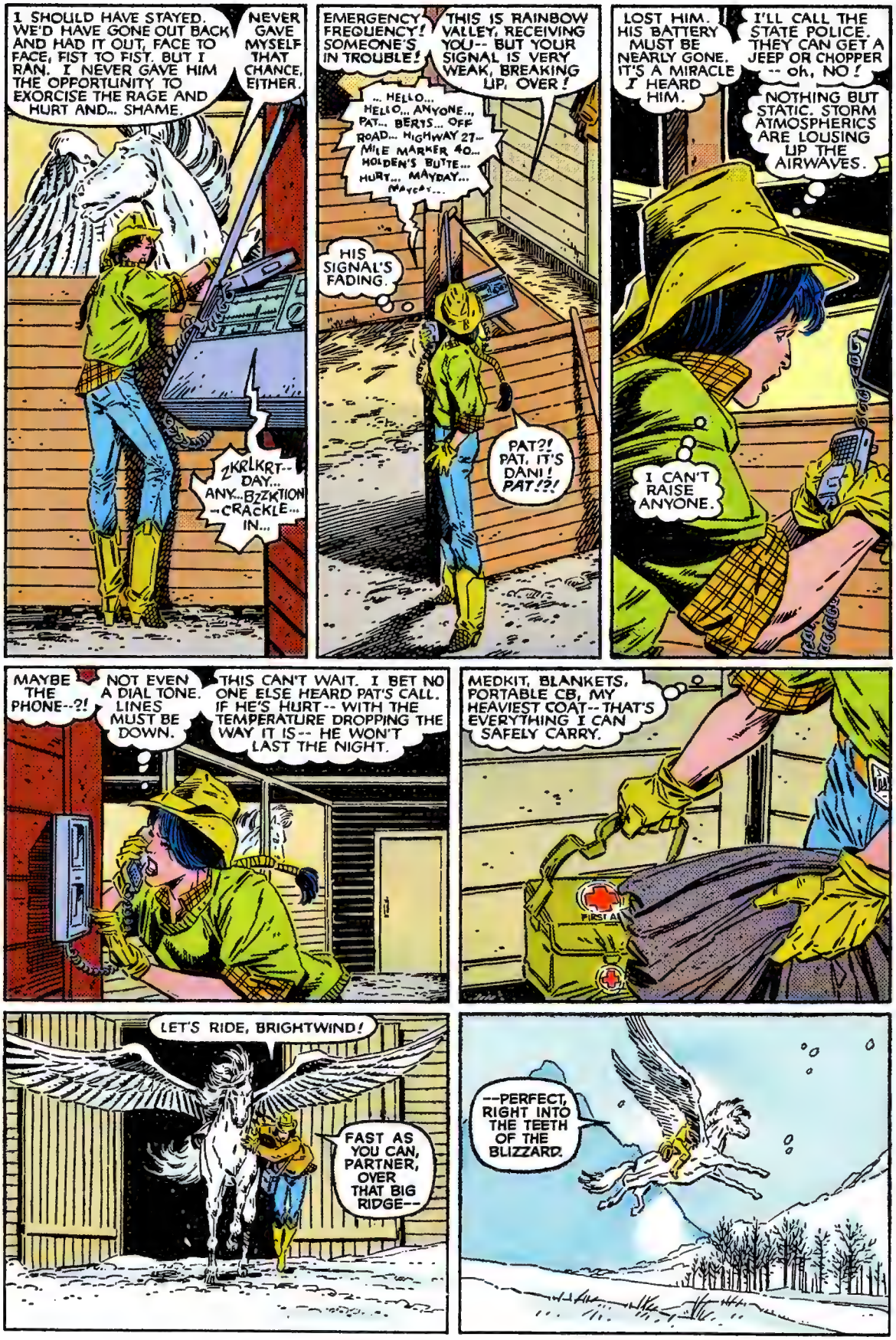
WHAT ILL WIND BLEW YOU INTO TOWN?!
HELLO, PAT.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
NOT LONG ENOUGH, RED.

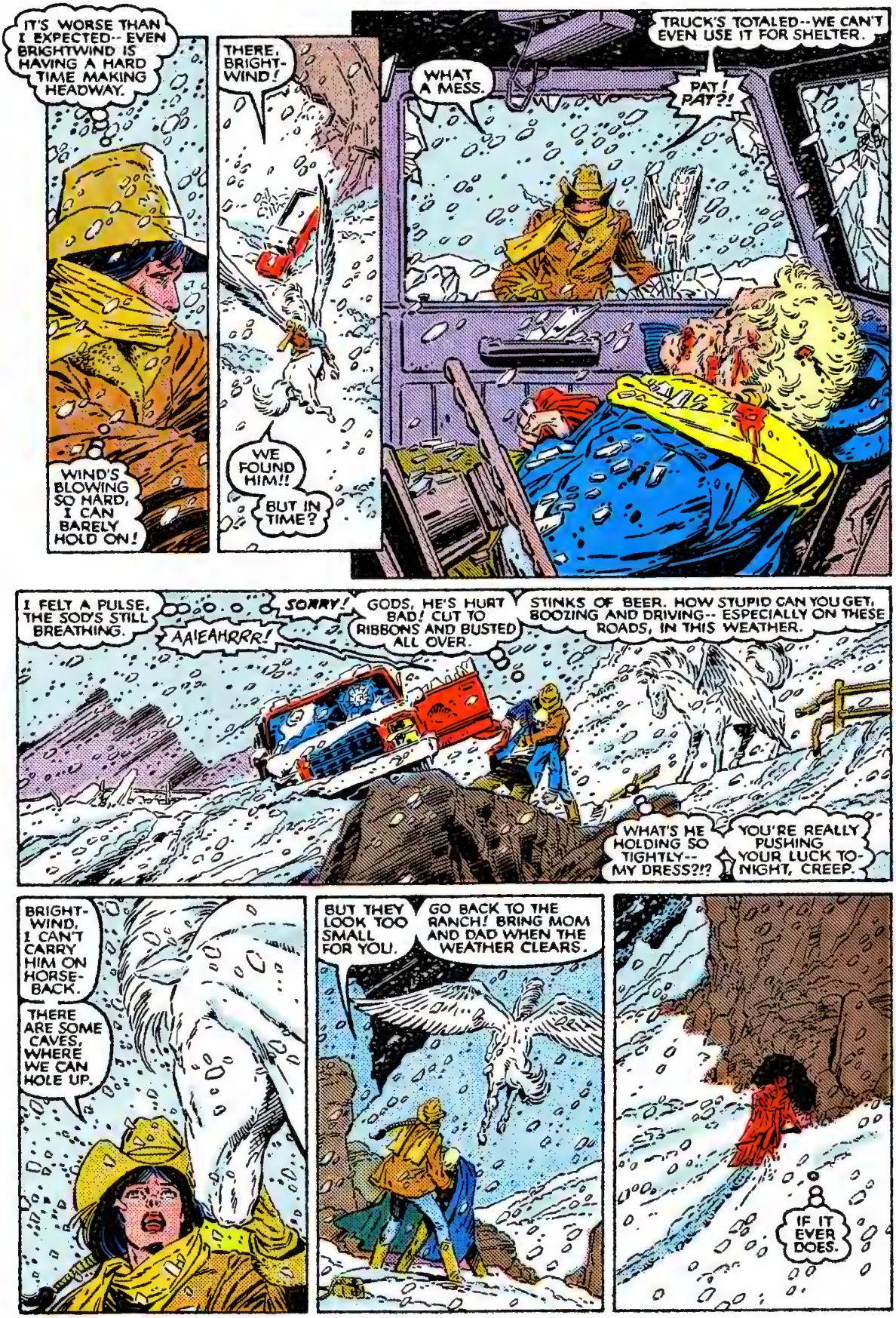
FIGURED YOU WERE GONE FOR GOOD, MOONSTAR-- SHIPPED OFF TO SOME FANCY SCHOOL BACK EAST AFTER YOUR GRAN'PA CROAKED.
BLACK EAGLE WAS MURDERED.
HAPPENS. ESPECIALLY TO RED-SKINS.
BRUCE
I'M HOME VISITING MY PARENTS, IF THAT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS.
I HEARD THEY WERE BACK-- AS MYSTERIOUSLY AS THEY VANISHED-- AN' JUST WHEN MY PA WAS ABOUT TO CLOSE A DEAL FOR THEIR SPREAD. TOO BAD.
LIAR!
OUR RANCH WAS NEVER FOR SALE. AND IT NEVER WILL BE!
WHOA-HO-- THE SQUAW HAS SPUNK!
YOU DON'T LIKE WHAT I SAY, INJUN, OR THE WAY I SAY IT--
--MAKE SOMETHING OF IT.
C'MON. YOU'RE A TOUGH OLD GIRL, DANI. PROVE IT. TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT.
DROP DEAD.
I AIN'T IMPRESSED.
OWHW!
HE-- WANTS ME TO SWING AT HIM...
... SO HE CAN HIT ME BACK.
WE USED TO BE BEST FRIENDS.
BUT INSIDE HIM IT'S ALL TURNED TO HATE...
... BECAUSE OF WHAT I DID--HEY?! LEGGO!!
GIVE THAT BACK!
PRETTY BOX.
HEY HEY HEY!
RED, THIS IS WAY TOO NICE AN OUTFIT FOR THE LIKES OF YOU.
ANYONE ELSE INTERESTED?

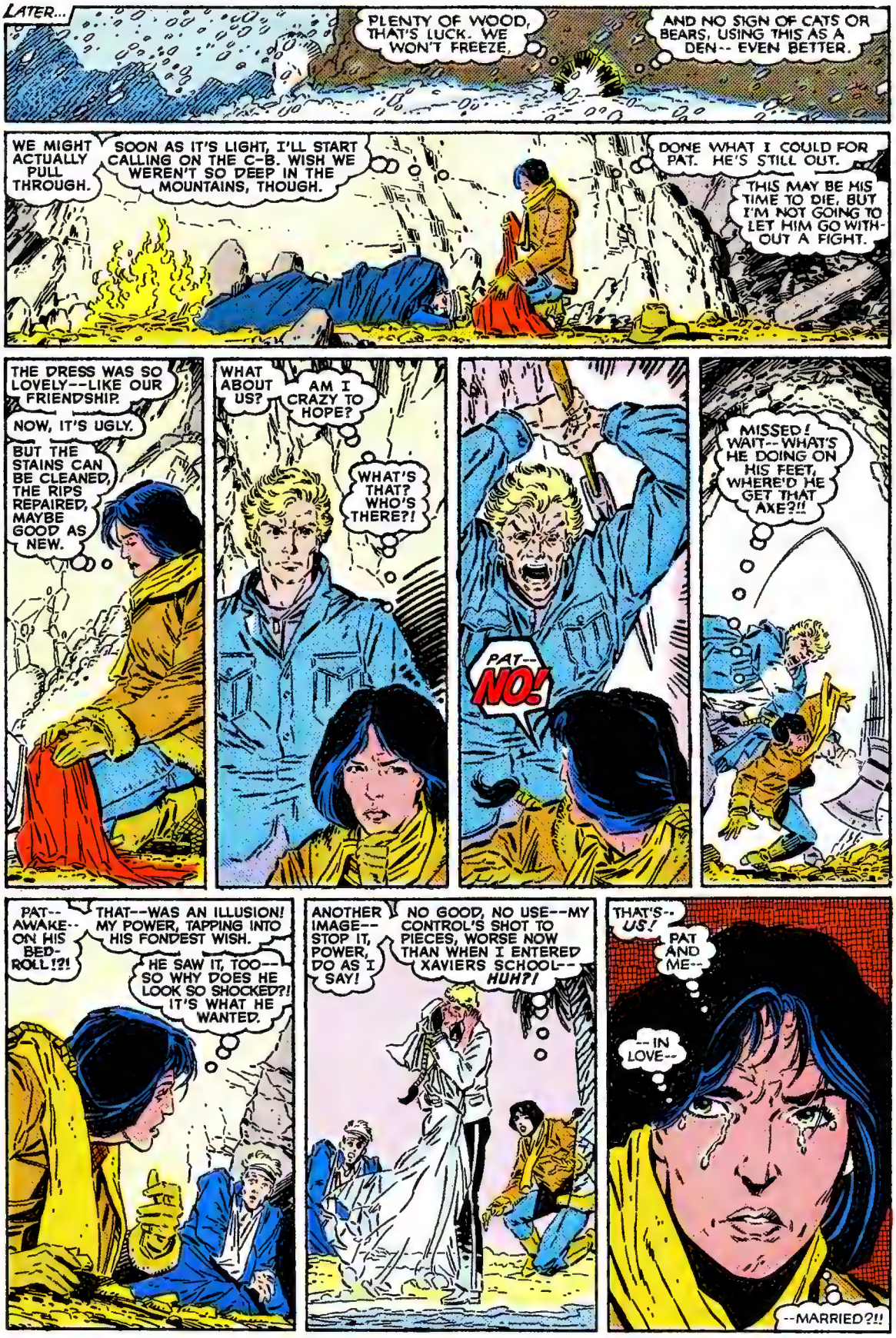

I'M FEELING GENEROUS, DANI. YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT ME LIKE A WHITE. YOU CAN USE YOUR STINKING SPECIAL REDSKIN WAY, HOW'S THAT?!
HE'S DARING ME TO UNLEASH MY POWER...
...LIKE I DID BEFORE--
--GASP?!?
A DEATH IMAGE!
EMBRACING PAT!
IT'S PART OF THE POWER I HAVE AS A VALKYRIE--
--ITS PRESENCE MEANS THAT, SOMETIME SOON...
...PAT ROBERTS IS GOING TO DIE!
OH, SPIRITS, IS THIS MY FAULT? DID MY CURSE A MOMENT AGO SUMMON THE REAPER?!
GET AWAY FROM ME, ALL OF YOU--
--GET AWAY!
SHE STRIKES WITH A FURY BORN OF TERROR...
...AND SKILLS TAUGHT HER BY THOSE TO WHOM UNARMED COMBAT IS A WAY OF LIFE.
ONCE FREE OF PAT AND HIS FRIENDS...
...SHE RUNS.
WE AIN'T THROUGH, SQUAW, NOT BY A LONG SHOT.
YOU OWE ME BIG, AN' I AIM TO COLLECT FROM YOUR PRETTY RED HIDE!
THERE ARE LOTS OF LONELY ROADS IN YOUR HIGH COUNTRY, INJUN -- I KNOW 'EM AS WELL AS YOU DO--
--AN' IF A BODY DON'T WALK REAL CAREFUL...
...SHE CAN HAVE HERSELF A NASTY ACCIDENT.
MAYBE EVEN A FATAL ONE!

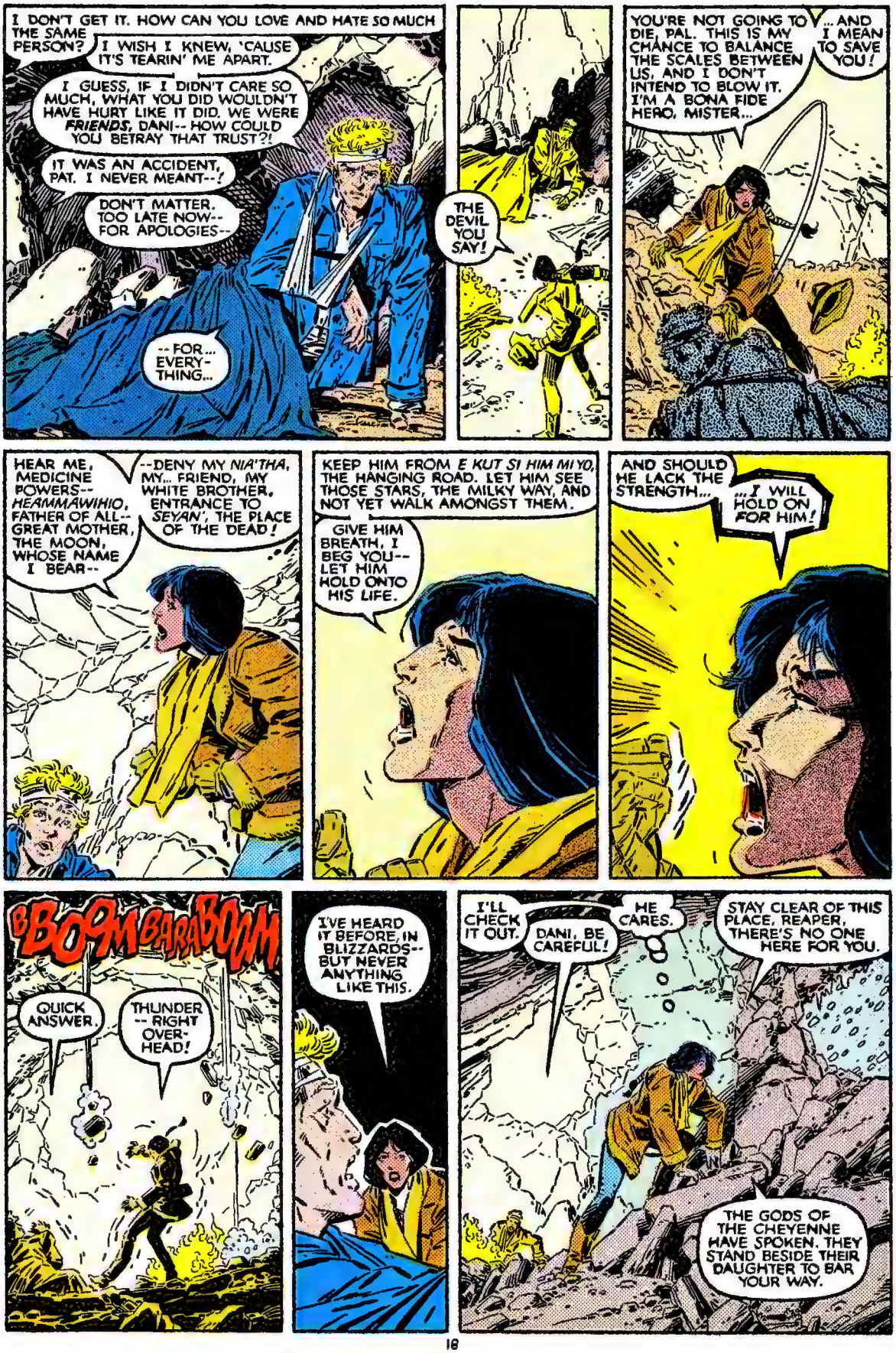

YO, PAT-- CHILL OUT, MAN.
HASSLIN' MOONSTAR WAS ONE THING, BUT YOU'RE TALKIN' CRAZY.
WE'VE HAD OUR FUN, LEAVE HER BE.
GO TO BLAZES!
THIS HAS BEEN EATING ME UP TOO LONG.
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, IT'S GOING TO BE SETTLED.
CAT
PAT, DON'T DO THIS-- PLEASE! LISTEN TO YOUR FRIENDS!
AIYI-- MIGHT AS WELL COMMAND THE WIND.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?! HOW CAN I PROTECT HIM?! WHY EVEN BOTHER?!
HE'S IN MORTAL PERIL-- BUT TRY TELLING HIM THAT, HE'D LAUGH IN MY FACE. BEFORE GOING FOR MY THROAT.
IF OUR POSITIONS WERE REVERSED, HE'D PROBABLY CHEER DEATH ON.
HE WASN'T ALWAYS LIKE THAT, THOUGH.
ONCE-- ANCIENT HISTORY-- WE WERE AS TIGHT, AS INSEPARABLE, AS ME AND BRIGHTWIND.
THAT CAR--THE INTERSECTION-- PAT, LOOK OUT!!
"IS THIS THE MOMENT--?!
SCREEEE
BEEPBEEEEEEP!
"NO, THANK THE SPIRITS. NOT YET.
"I CAN'T STAY ANY LONGER. THE STORM'S WORSENING BY THE MINUTE.
INSULIN
"I HAVE TO HEAD HOME.
"PAT, IF YOU'VE ANY SENSE, YOU'LL DO THE SAME.
INSULIN
HANDLE WITH CARE
LONE STAR
BEER

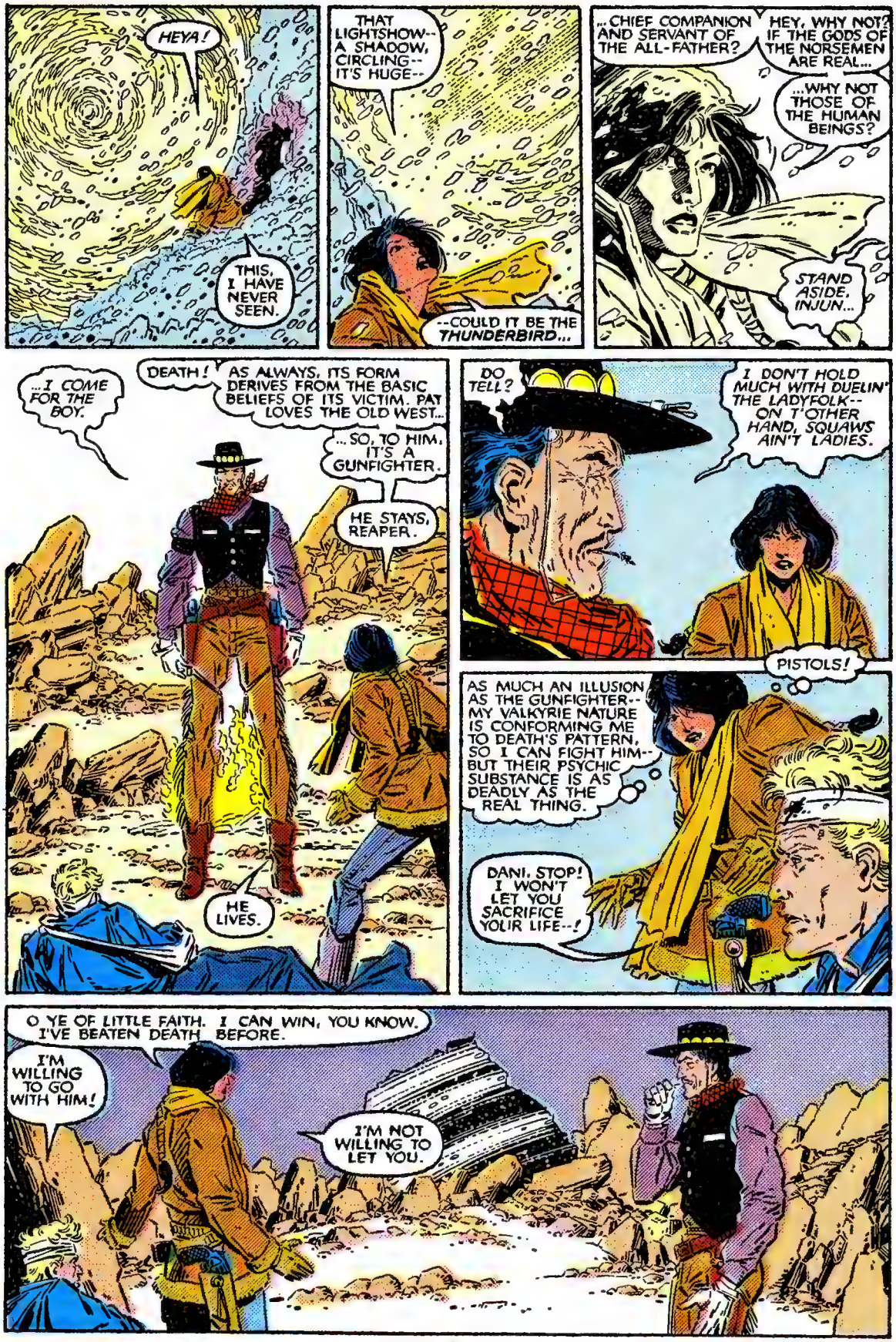

ANOTHER DAWN...
... BRINGS ANOTHER ALL-TOO-BRIEF RESPITE FROM WINTER'S FURY, AND A CHANCE FOR DANI TO MAKE A DENT IN THE HOUSEHOLD CHORES.
THINGS ARE FINE HERE, DAD.
COUNTY MAY EVEN HAVE A ROAD OPEN TO US BY NIGHT-FALL, OVER.
WHAT'S THIS YOUR MOTHER SAYS ABOUT YOU HAVING A RUN-IN WITH PAT ROBERTS?
NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE.
BE CAREFUL. HE ISN'T THE BOY WE REMEMBER.
TELL ME ABOUT IT.
TAKE CARE, YOU TWO. BE SEEING YOU SOON, I HOPE.
RAINBOW VALLEY, OVER AND OUT.
WHATEVER PAT'S BECOME, I'M PARTLY TO BLAME.
IS HE STILL OKAY? I SHOULD HAVE STAYED WITH HIM YESTERDAY, BUT IT WAS EASIER TO ABANDON HIM. GETS EASIER EVERY TIME.
THE FOLKS KNOW I'M A MUTANT, BUT HOW WILL THEY REACT TO MY BECOMING A VALKYRIE?
WHAT DO I DO THE DAY THE REAPER COMES FOR THEM? WHAT IF I TRY TO SAVE THEM AND FAIL?!
Oh, PAT--!
I TAUGHT HIM TO RIDE.
HE TAUGHT ME TO SHOOT, RIFLE AND BOW,
I'D BEEN WITH HIS FAMILY A WEEK, BRIGHT-WIND.
I WAS SCARED AND LONELY, A CAGED WILDCAT DRESSED UP AS A LITTLE GIRL. WE WERE AT SUNDAY DINNER, WITH HIS WHOLE FAMILY.
PAT SAID SOMETHING, I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT, AND I SNAPPED INSIDE, HIT HIM FULL FORCE WITH A POWER I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD.
I GRABBED HIS GREATEST FEAR AND DESIRE, AND HAULED THEM OUT FOR HIS KIN TO SEE.


I SHOULD HAVE STAYED. WE'D HAVE GONE OUT BACK AND HAD IT OUT, FACE TO FACE, FIST TO FIST. BUT I RAN. I NEVER GAVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXORCISE THE RAGE AND HURT AND... SHAME.
NEVER GAVE MYSELF THAT CHANCE, EITHER.
ZKRLKRT-- DAY... ANY... BZZKTION --CRACKLE... IN...
EMERGENCY FREQUENCY! SOMEONE'S IN TROUBLE!
THIS IS RAINBOW VALLEY, RECEIVING YOU-- BUT YOUR SIGNAL IS VERY WEAK, BREAKING UP, OVER!
... HELLO... HELLO... ANYONE... PAT... BERTS... OFF ROAD... HIGHWAY 27-- MILE MARKER 40... HOLDEN'S BUTTE... HURT... MAYDAY... MAYDAY...
HIS SIGNAL'S FADING.
PAT?! PAT, IT'S DANI! PAT!?!
LOST HIM. HIS BATTERY MUST BE NEARLY GONE. IT'S A MIRACLE I HEARD HIM.
I'LL CALL THE STATE POLICE. THEY CAN GET A JEEP OR CHOPPER -- oh, NO!
NOTHING BUT STATIC. STORM ATMOSPHERICS ARE LOUSING UP THE AIRWAVES.
I CAN'T RAISE ANYONE.
MAYBE THE PHONE--?!
NOT EVEN A DIAL TONE. LINES MUST BE DOWN.
THIS CAN'T WAIT. I BET NO ONE ELSE HEARD PAT'S CALL. IF HE'S HURT -- WITH THE TEMPERATURE DROPPING THE WAY IT IS-- HE WON'T LAST THE NIGHT.
MEDKIT, BLANKETS, PORTABLE CB, MY HEAVIEST COAT-- THAT'S EVERYTHING I CAN SAFELY CARRY.
FIRST AI
LET'S RIDE, BRIGHTWIND!
FAST AS YOU CAN, PARTNER, OVER THAT BIG RIDGE--
--PERFECT, RIGHT INTO THE TEETH OF THE BLIZZARD.


IT'S WORSE THAN I EXPECTED-- EVEN BRIGHTWIND IS HAVING A HARD TIME MAKING HEADWAY.
WIND'S BLOWING SO HARD, I CAN BARELY HOLD ON!
THERE, BRIGHT-WIND!
WE FOUND HIM!!
BUT IN TIME?
WHAT A MESS.
PAT! PAT?!
TRUCK'S TOTALED--WE CAN'T EVEN USE IT FOR SHELTER.
I FELT A PULSE. THE SOD'S STILL BREATHING.
SORRY!
AAIEAHRRR!
GODS, HE'S HURT BAD! CUT TO RIBBONS AND BUSTED ALL OVER.
STINKS OF BEER. HOW STUPID CAN YOU GET, BOOZING AND DRIVING-- ESPECIALLY ON THESE ROADS, IN THIS WEATHER.
WHAT'S HE HOLDING SO TIGHTLY-- MY DRESS?!?
YOU'RE REALLY PUSHING YOUR LUCK TO-NIGHT, CREEP.
BRIGHT-WIND, I CAN'T CARRY HIM ON HORSE-BACK.
THERE ARE SOME CAVES, WHERE WE CAN HOLE UP.
BUT THEY LOOK TOO SMALL FOR YOU.
GO BACK TO THE RANCH! BRING MOM AND DAD WHEN THE WEATHER CLEARS.
IF IT EVER DOES.


LATER...
PLENTY OF WOOD, THAT'S LUCK. WE WON'T FREEZE.
AND NO SIGN OF CATS OR BEARS, USING THIS AS A DEN-- EVEN BETTER.
WE MIGHT ACTUALLY PULL THROUGH.
SOON AS IT'S LIGHT, I'LL START CALLING ON THE C-B. WISH WE WEREN'T SO DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS, THOUGH.
DONE WHAT I COULD FOR PAT. HE'S STILL OUT.
THIS MAY BE HIS TIME TO DIE, BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET HIM GO WITHOUT A FIGHT.
THE DRESS WAS SO LOVELY--LIKE OUR FRIENDSHIP.
NOW, IT'S UGLY.
BUT THE STAINS CAN BE CLEANED, THE RIPS REPAIRED, MAYBE GOOD AS NEW.
WHAT ABOUT US?
AM I CRAZY TO HOPE?
WHAT'S THAT? WHO'S THERE?!
PAT-- NO!
MISSED! WAIT-- WHAT'S HE DOING ON HIS FEET, WHERE'D HE GET THAT AXE?!!
PAT-- AWAKE-- ON HIS BED-ROLL!?!
THAT--WAS AN ILLUSION! MY POWER, TAPPING INTO HIS FONDEST WISH.
HE SAW IT, TOO-- SO WHY DOES HE LOOK SO SHOCKED?! IT'S WHAT HE WANTED.
ANOTHER IMAGE-- STOP IT, POWER, DO AS I SAY!
NO GOOD, NO USE--MY CONTROL'S SHOT TO PIECES, WORSE NOW THAN WHEN I ENTERED XAVIERS SCHOOL-- HUH?!
THAT'S-- US!
PAT AND ME--
--IN LOVE--
--MARRIED?!!


I DON'T GET IT. HOW CAN YOU LOVE AND HATE SO MUCH THE SAME PERSON?
I WISH I KNEW, 'CAUSE IT'S TEARIN' ME APART.
I GUESS, IF I DIDN'T CARE SO MUCH, WHAT YOU DID WOULDN'T HAVE HURT LIKE IT DID. WE WERE FRIENDS, DANI-- HOW COULD YOU BETRAY THAT TRUST?!
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, PAT. I NEVER MEANT--!
DON'T MATTER. TOO LATE NOW-- FOR APOLOGIES--
--FOR... EVERY-THING...
THE DEVIL YOU SAY!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DIE, PAL. THIS IS MY CHANCE TO BALANCE THE SCALES BETWEEN US, AND I DON'T INTEND TO BLOW IT. I'M A BONA FIDE HERO, MISTER...
...AND I MEAN TO SAVE YOU!
HEAR ME, MEDICINE POWERS-- HEAMMAWIHIO, FATHER OF ALL-- GREAT MOTHER, THE MOON, WHOSE NAME I BEAR--
--DENY MY NIA'THA, MY... FRIEND, MY WHITE BROTHER. ENTRANCE TO SEYAN', THE PLACE OF THE DEAD!
KEEP HIM FROM E KUT SI HIM MI YO, THE HANGING ROAD. LET HIM SEE THOSE STARS, THE MILKY WAY, AND NOT YET WALK AMONGST THEM.
GIVE HIM BREATH, I BEG YOU-- LET HIM HOLD ONTO HIS LIFE.
AND SHOULD HE LACK THE STRENGTH...
...I WILL HOLD ON FOR HIM!
BOOM BABABOOM
QUICK ANSWER.
THUNDER -- RIGHT OVER-HEAD!
I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE, IN BLIZZARDS-- BUT NEVER ANYTHING LIKE THIS.
I'LL CHECK IT OUT.
DANI, BE CAREFUL!
HE CARES.
STAY CLEAR OF THIS PLACE, REAPER, THERE'S NO ONE HERE FOR YOU.
THE GODS OF THE CHEYENNE HAVE SPOKEN. THEY STAND BESIDE THEIR DAUGHTER TO BAR YOUR WAY.


HEYA!
THIS, I HAVE NEVER SEEN.
THAT LIGHTSHOW-- A SHADOW, CIRCLING-- IT'S HUGE--
--COULD IT BE THE THUNDERBIRD...
...CHIEF COMPANION AND SERVANT OF THE ALL-FATHER?
HEY, WHY NOT? IF THE GODS OF THE NORSEMEN ARE REAL...
...WHY NOT THOSE OF THE HUMAN BEINGS?
STAND ASIDE, INJUN...
...I COME FOR THE BOY.
DEATH! AS ALWAYS, ITS FORM DERIVES FROM THE BASIC BELIEFS OF ITS VICTIM. PAT LOVES THE OLD WEST...
...SO, TO HIM, IT'S A GUNFIGHTER.
HE STAYS, REAPER.
HE LIVES.
DO TELL?
I DON'T HOLD MUCH WITH DUELIN' THE LADYFOLK-- ON T'OTHER HAND, SQUAWS AIN'T LADIES.
PISTOLS!
AS MUCH AN ILLUSION AS THE GUNFIGHTER-- MY VALKYRIE NATURE IS CONFORMING ME TO DEATH'S PATTERN, SO I CAN FIGHT HIM-- BUT THEIR PSYCHIC SUBSTANCE IS AS DEADLY AS THE REAL THING.
DANI, STOP! I WON'T LET YOU SACRIFICE YOUR LIFE--!
O YE OF LITTLE FAITH. I CAN WIN, YOU KNOW. I'VE BEATEN DEATH BEFORE.
I'M WILLING TO GO WITH HIM!
I'M NOT WILLING TO LET YOU.

MAKE YOUR MOVE, HOMBRE.
YOUR FUNERAL, SQUAW.
NOT MINE!
NOT PAT'S!
BLAM!
B-BLAM!
I WON!
I BEAT DEATH!!
PAT, I SAVED YOU! WAY TO GO!
HEY, WHAT'S THE MATTER, PAL? YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!
I WAS JUST THINKING -- OF WHAT WE HAD AS KIDS...
...AND WHAT A MESS WE MADE OF IT...
MY FAULT, MOSTLY. MY MISTAKE.
BUT NOW WE CAN START AGAIN.
WE HAVE A SECOND CHANCE. WE CAN BE FRIENDS -- PAT!?!
HE'S FADING AWAY--!
NO, THERE HE IS. WHERE I LAID HIM. ASLEEP--?!
WHAT'S GOING ON?! WAS I TALKING TO ONE OF MY OWN SPIRIT-FORMS, A REPRESENTATION OF PAT?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?!?

BULLPEN BULLETINS

Tom DeFalco . . .

. . . has gotten very philosophical ever since he finished reading **Secret Wars II**. Apparently, being exposed to my keen insights into human nature, my observations on The Meaning of Life, and my reflections upon the relationship of man and god has **changed** him somehow. It wasn't so bad the first couple of weeks when he was just walking around with his hands folded, lost in existential pondering—but then he saw **Super Bowl XX**.

"I've got it," he announced as he arrived at work on Super Bowl Monday. "I, too, have keen insight into human nature, and I have devised a way to improve office morale as well as the quality of our work."

"Office morale's fine," said I, "and everybody's already doing the best he, she, or it can."

"Picture this," Tom continued, undaunted, "are you ready? **Cheerleaders!** What do you think? Huh?"

"You mean . . . girls with pom-poms?"

"And guys with megaphones! No sexism here!"

"But . . ."

"**Think** of it! For the inkers, they'd be shouting '**hold that line!**' For the letterers, it'd be 'gimme an **m**! Gimme an **a**!' "

"Gimme a **break!**" I screamed. "Why don't you go lie down, Tom! The pressure of being Executive Editor is getting to you. You need rest. Or a shrink. Or something."

Crushed, Tom shambled away. I wondered if I'd been too rough on him.

But, then, later, I saw him delivering his latest script for **The Amazing Spider-Man** to editor Jim Owsley's office. He ran it into the room . . .

. . . and he **spiked** it.

Good grief.

On Another Note . . .

While out in Denver recently I happened to catch a performance by six of the most talented musicians I have ever seen—**Bill Wesley, Wes Makey, Windall Armour, Rob Chamberlin, Steve Espinoza,** and **Curtis Bushey**. Together, they're . . .

The Hit City Band

I understand that they'll have a syndicated TV show starting up in March called **Hit City**. Figures. Also, they'll be on the road soon, so watch for them in your town.

I never met these guys before, none of them are my relatives, and no, they don't have pictures of me in a Compromising Situation. I'm giving them this plug because they're just plain **fantastic**. When they make it big, remember, you heard about 'em here first.

The New Universe!

Eight exciting new titles will be launched this summer, four in July and four in August. Together, they form the foundation of the **New Universe**. Twenty-five years ago Stan Lee and several extremely talented artists brought forth the Marvel Universe. Now, in honor of the silver anniversary of their achievement, we're creating another Universe, unlike anything ever created before. You'll have to see it to believe it. Watch this space for more information.

Thanks . . .

. . . for your support. Be well.

Jim Shooter
Editor in Chief

CHECKLIST

- ☐ **CLOAK AND DAGGER #7**
- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #232**
- ☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS #10**—On the trail of the missing Ben Grimm, with special guest star, the Thing!
- ☐ **NEW MUTANTS #41**
- ☐ **SQUADRON SUPREME (Limited Series) #11**
- ☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #16**
- ☐ **CONAN THE KING #35**
- ☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #36**—With the Avengers!
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #319**—More than a score of Marvel villains are wiped out when the Scourge comes to town!
- ☐ **POWER PACK #24**
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #277**—Watch out! It's the Scourge!
- ☐ **VISION AND SCARLET WITCH (Limited Series) #10**—Guest-starring the Inhumans!
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR INDEX #8**—The real scoop on what happened in issues #126–147!
- ☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #8**—"M's" the letter!
- ☐ **AVENGERS #269**
- ☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #184**
- ☐ **ETERNALS #10**—With the Mighty Thor!
- ☐ **G.I. JOE #49**—The origin of the Cobra Emperor!
- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #321**
- ☐ **MARVEL TALES #189**
- ☐ **POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #124**—Alone in the Ninja Compound!
- ☐ **SOLOMON KANE (Limited Series) #6**
- ☐ **X-MEN #207**
- ☐ **MARVEL SAGA #8**—Iron Man gets his golden armor and the FF are bankrupt, while the Angel tries out his wings!
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #292**—Versus Adolph Hitler!
- ☐ **IRON MAN #208**
- ☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #116**
- ☐ **THOR #369**
- ☐ **TRANSFORMERS #18**
- ☐ **X-FACTOR #6**—Revealed at last: The master of the evil mutants!
- ☐ **SECTAURS #7**
- ☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP INDEX #4**—Spidey and his partners swing into action in issues #60–82!
- ☐ **DOCTOR WHO #22**
- ☐ **STAR WARS #106**

MARVEL MAGAZINES

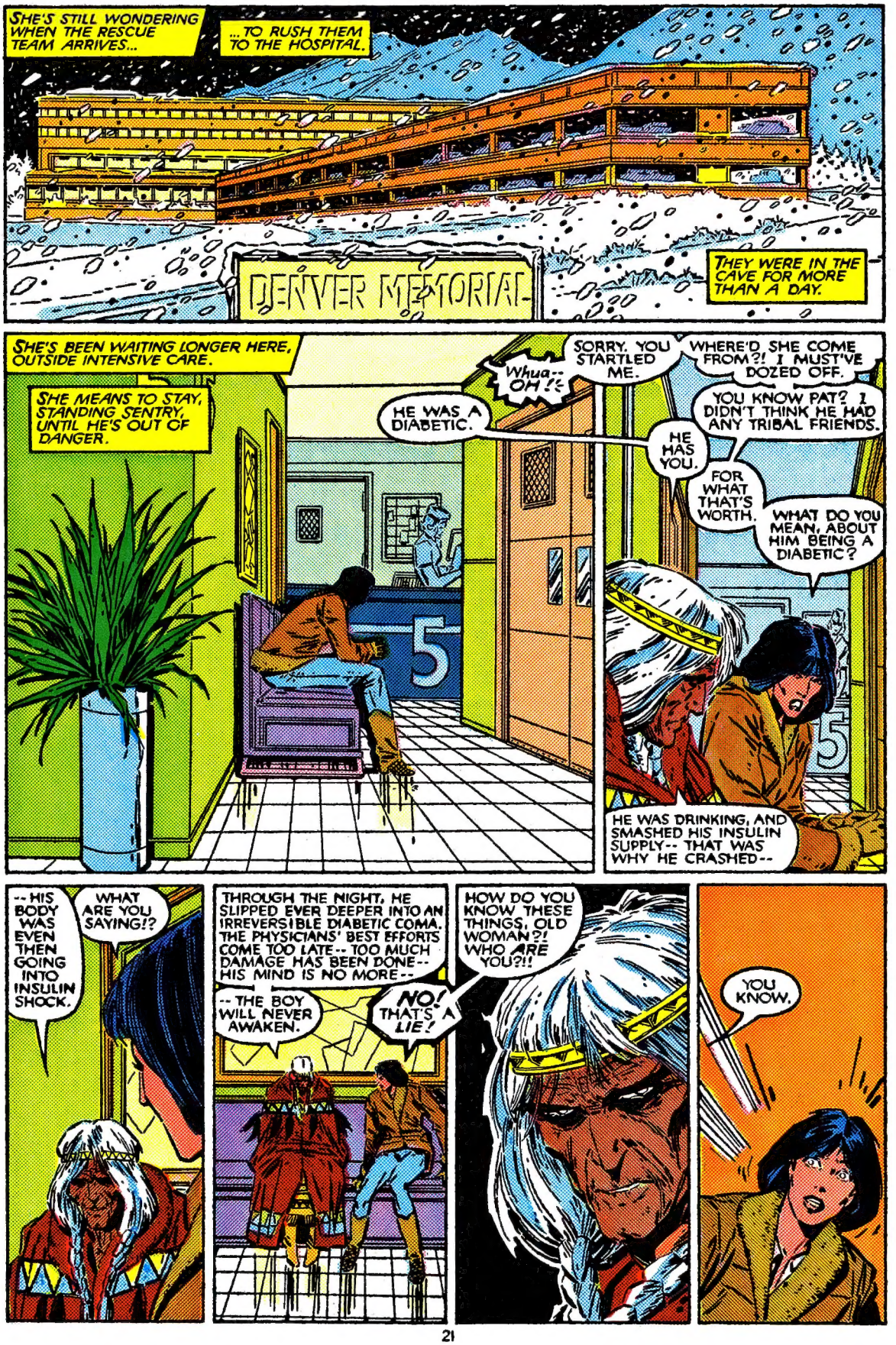
- ☐ **MARVEL AGE #40**
- ☐ **MARVEL FANFARE #27**—BILL MANTLO and TONY SALMONS bring you a Daredevil extravaganza!
- ☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #125**
- ☐ **SAVAGE TALES #5**—The *only* place to go for hard-hitting adventure!

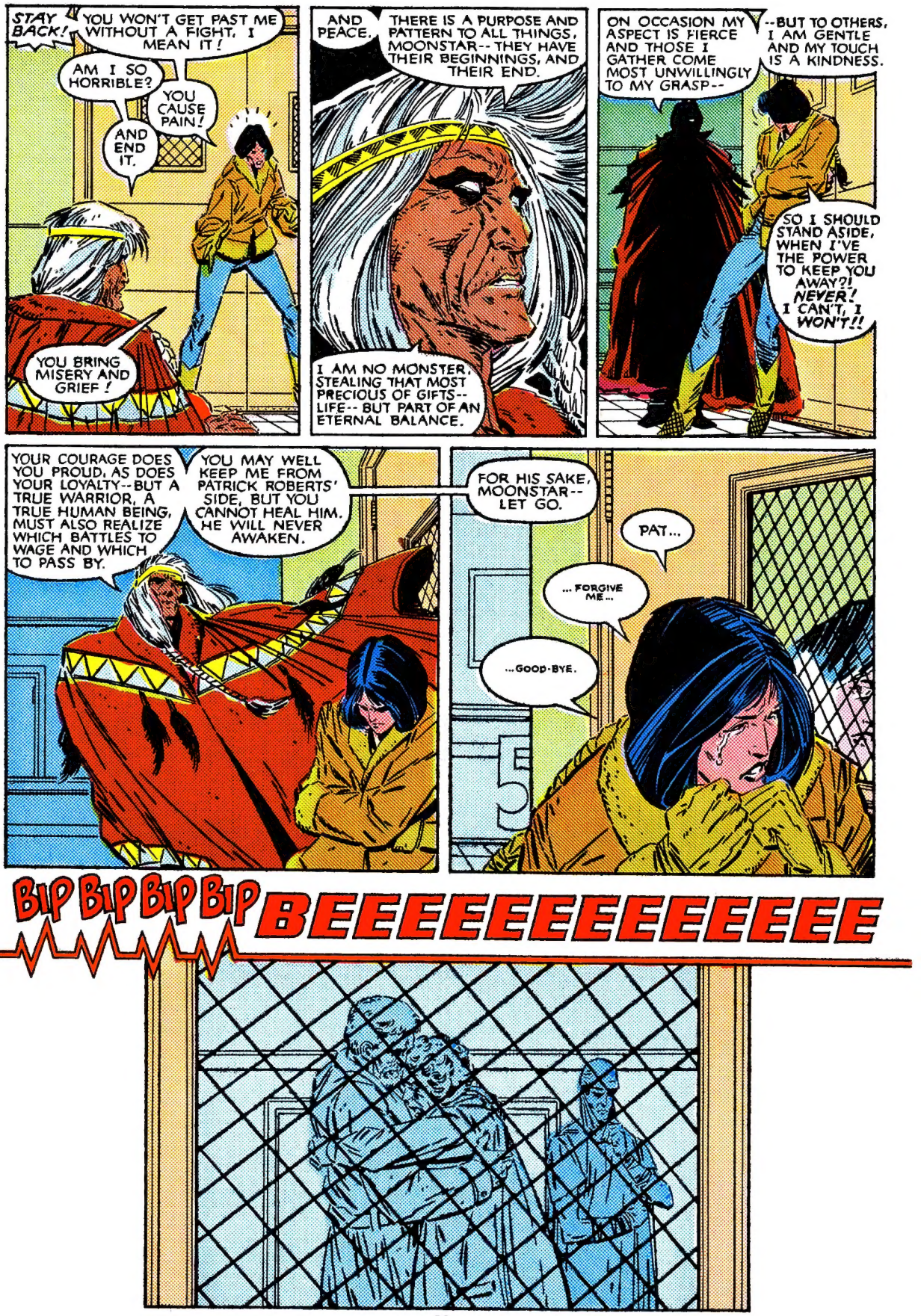
EPIC COMICS

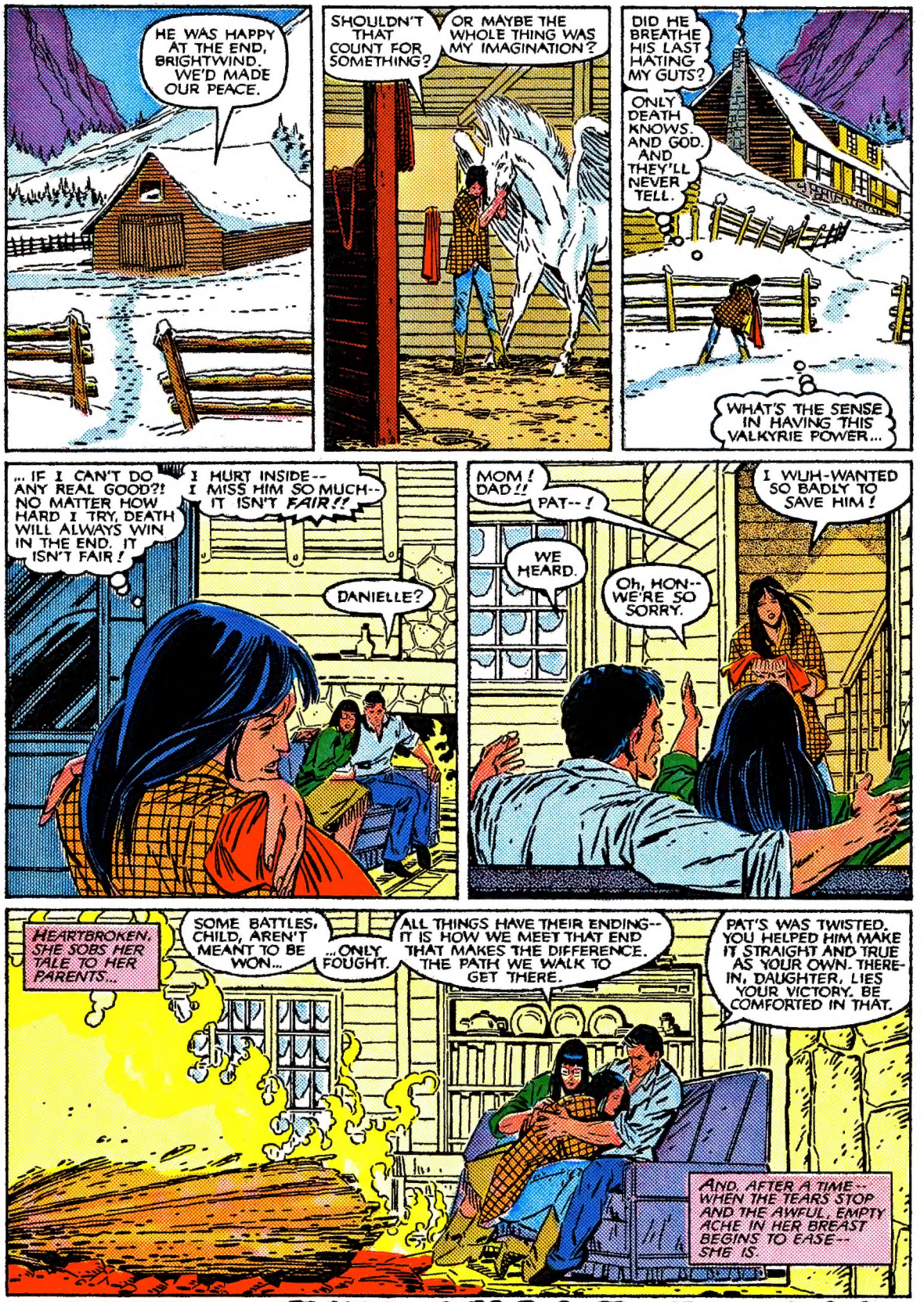
- ☐ **ELFQUEST #12**
- ☐ **SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #7**—Their only hope is . . . Cap'n Kidd!
- ☐ **THE ONE (Limited Series) #6**—The One fights the Other for the control of the Human Race!
- ☐ **GROO THE WANDERER #17**
- ☐ **BOZZ CHRONICLES (Limited Series) #3**

STAR COMICS

- ☐ **MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE #2**—The Comet Warriors drop in on He-Man and Orko, but when the Meteorb Legion arrives, things really get hot!
- ☐ **PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #8**—Featuring "Kimono My House or Pigs Over Tokyo!"
- ☐ **EWOKS #8**—Logray battles the evil witch Morag!
- ☐ **MUPPET BABIES #8**—Gonzo celebrates Camilla's birthday . . . in Featherland!
- ☐ **CARE BEARS #5**—It's the story of the very first Care Bear!


SHE'S STILL WONDERING WHEN THE RESCUE TEAM ARRIVES...
... TO RUSH THEM TO THE HOSPITAL.
DENVER MEMORIAL
THEY WERE IN THE CAVE FOR MORE THAN A DAY.
SHE'S BEEN WAITING LONGER HERE, OUTSIDE INTENSIVE CARE.
SHE MEANS TO STAY, STANDING SENTRY, UNTIL HE'S OUT OF DANGER.
Whua-- OH!?
SORRY. YOU STARTLED ME.
WHERE'D SHE COME FROM?! I MUST'VE DOZED OFF.
HE WAS A DIABETIC.
YOU KNOW PAT? I DIDN'T THINK HE HAD ANY TRIBAL FRIENDS.
HE HAS YOU.
FOR WHAT THAT'S WORTH.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, ABOUT HIM BEING A DIABETIC?
HE WAS DRINKING, AND SMASHED HIS INSULIN SUPPLY-- THAT WAS WHY HE CRASHED--
-- HIS BODY WAS EVEN THEN GOING INTO INSULIN SHOCK.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?
THROUGH THE NIGHT, HE SLIPPED EVER DEEPER INTO AN IRREVERSIBLE DIABETIC COMA. THE PHYSICIANS' BEST EFFORTS COME TOO LATE-- TOO MUCH DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE-- HIS MIND IS NO MORE--
-- THE BOY WILL NEVER AWAKEN.
NO! THAT'S A LIE!
HOW DO YOU KNOW THESE THINGS, OLD WOMAN?! WHO ARE YOU?!!
YOU KNOW.


STAY BACK!
YOU WON'T GET PAST ME WITHOUT A FIGHT, I MEAN IT!
AM I SO HORRIBLE?
YOU CAUSE PAIN!
AND END IT.
YOU BRING MISERY AND GRIEF!
AND PEACE.
THERE IS A PURPOSE AND PATTERN TO ALL THINGS, MOONSTAR-- THEY HAVE THEIR BEGINNINGS, AND THEIR END.
I AM NO MONSTER, STEALING THAT MOST PRECIOUS OF GIFTS-- LIFE-- BUT PART OF AN ETERNAL BALANCE.
ON OCCASION MY ASPECT IS FIERCE AND THOSE I GATHER COME MOST UNWILLINGLY TO MY GRASP--
--BUT TO OTHERS, I AM GENTLE AND MY TOUCH IS A KINDNESS.
SO I SHOULD STAND ASIDE, WHEN I'VE THE POWER TO KEEP YOU AWAY?! NEVER! I CAN'T, I WON'T!!
YOUR COURAGE DOES YOU PROUD, AS DOES YOUR LOYALTY--BUT A TRUE WARRIOR, A TRUE HUMAN BEING, MUST ALSO REALIZE WHICH BATTLES TO WAGE AND WHICH TO PASS BY.
YOU MAY WELL KEEP ME FROM PATRICK ROBERTS' SIDE, BUT YOU CANNOT HEAL HIM. HE WILL NEVER AWAKEN.
FOR HIS SAKE, MOONSTAR-- LET GO.
PAT...
...FORGIVE ME...
...GOOD-BYE.
BIP BIP BIP BIP BEEEEEEEEEEEEEE


HE WAS HAPPY AT THE END, BRIGHTWIND. WE'D MADE OUR PEACE.
SHOULDN'T THAT COUNT FOR SOMETHING?
OR MAYBE THE WHOLE THING WAS MY IMAGINATION?
DID HE BREATHE HIS LAST HATING MY GUTS?
ONLY DEATH KNOWS. AND GOD. AND THEY'LL NEVER TELL.
WHAT'S THE SENSE IN HAVING THIS VALKYRIE POWER...
... IF I CAN'T DO ANY REAL GOOD?! NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, DEATH WILL ALWAYS WIN IN THE END. IT ISN'T FAIR!
I HURT INSIDE-- I MISS HIM SO MUCH-- IT ISN'T FAIR!!
DANIELLE?
MOM! DAD!!
PAT--!
WE HEARD.
Oh, HON-- WE'RE SO SORRY.
I WUH-WANTED SO BADLY TO SAVE HIM!
HEARTBROKEN, SHE SOBS HER TALE TO HER PARENTS...
SOME BATTLES, CHILD, AREN'T MEANT TO BE WON...
...ONLY FOUGHT.
ALL THINGS HAVE THEIR ENDING-- IT IS HOW WE MEET THAT END THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE. THE PATH WE WALK TO GET THERE.
PAT'S WAS TWISTED. YOU HELPED HIM MAKE IT STRAIGHT AND TRUE AS YOUR OWN. THEREIN, DAUGHTER, LIES YOUR VICTORY. BE COMFORTED IN THAT.
AND, AFTER A TIME-- WHEN THE TEARS STOP AND THE AWFUL, EMPTY ACHE IN HER BREAST BEGINS TO EASE-- SHE IS.

NEXT: THE MUTANTS ARE BACK TOGETHER AGAIN AND UPPERMOST IN THEIR MINDS IS **GETTING EVEN!**

SYL3NT BOB MINUTEMEN